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A RESURRECTION OF RELICS

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A MODERN CHURCHMAN'S DEFENCE
IN A RECENT CHARGE OF HERESY

BY

H. D. A. MAJOR, B.D.

PRINCIPAL OF RIPON HALL, OXFORD
EDITOR OF *THE MODERN CHURCHMAN*

'If I did not feel that morality and godliness, and the practical belief of a judgment, were put into the greatest risk by the confusions which we are tolerating respecting these words, I would gladly pass them by. But I dare not be silent, because I see what a mass of unbelief and indifference is congealing in men's minds under a thin coating of apparent orthodoxy.'

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE.

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PREFACE

THE charge of heresy, to which this little book was the reply, arose out of an attack made by Canon Peter Green, of Manchester, upon the Cambridge Conference of Modern Churchmen and upon me in particular. This attack, which appeared in the *Church Times* of August 19th last, seemed calculated to give the impression that I did not believe in the Resurrection of the Dead. In my reply to Canon Peter Green I asserted that I did believe in the Resurrection of the Dead, but that the Resurrection of the Dead meant to me 'the survival of death by a personality which has shed its physical integument for ever.'

Towards the end of October the Bishop of Oxford informed me that he had received the following document :

*To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of
Oxford.*

I, CHARLES EDWARD DOUGLAS, priest of the diocese of Southwark, in the Province of Canterbury, hereby accuse HENRY DEWSBURY ALVES MAJOR, priest of your lordship's diocese

in the same province, of openly teaching* Doctrine concerning the Resurrection which is contrary to the Christian Religion as set forth :

(a) in the ancient creeds of the said Province contained in the Book of Common Prayer,

(b) in Holy Scripture where the Resurrection of the Body is taught explicitly and is a vital element in the general theological and philosophical system.

Further, I accuse Mr. Major of importing the teaching of a heathen mystic (Gautama) into the Christian Religion without warrant of reason or of observed fact.

These accusations I am prepared to substantiate and, in accordance with canonical precedent, I require that your lordship hold inquisition into the matter forthwith.

C. E. DOUGLAS.

ST. LUKE'S VICARAGE,

PECKHAM, S.E. 17.

September 10th, 1921.

* Enclosed—a public statement of the alleged heresy in the *Church Times* of September 9th. Extract from :

'the survival of death by a personality which has shed its physical integument for ever. This happens to be the form which the doctrine of the Resurrection assumes in my mind.'

His Lordship, in the interest of peace and to avoid a public scandal, suggested that I should communicate with Mr. Douglas in the hope that he would withdraw the charge. However, I felt unable to have any communication with my accuser, not because I bore him the slightest ill-will (for I have no doubt that he was guided in his action entirely by his admiration for traditional theology and his desire to see no departure from it in the official teaching of the Church of England) but because I felt that any communication with him might lay me open to the charge either of recantation or of prevarication, as it did in the case of Dr. Henson before his consecration to the See of Hereford.

Most unwillingly, therefore, the Bishop of Oxford had to let things take their course, and selected as his advisers those whose reputation for learning and orthodoxy entitled them to the respect of all parties in the Church. I had to prepare my reply to the charge during a heavy term's work, and this must be my excuse where it contains slips and infelicities of expression. I have added several footnotes for the elucidation or emphasis of points in the text.

The Bishop's dismissal of the charge is

contained in the following statement addressed by him to Mr. Douglas :

‘ I have examined very carefully the statement submitted to me by Mr. Major in reply to the accusation made against him “ (1) of openly teaching doctrine concerning the Resurrection of the Body which is contrary to the Christian Religion as set forth in the ancient creeds, contained in the Book of Common Prayer, and in Holy Scriptures; (2) of importing the teaching of a heathen mystic (Gautama) into the Christian Religion without warrant of reason or of observed fact.”

‘ I have also submitted your accusation and Mr. Major’s reply to four Professors in the University of Oxford, whose special office appeared to me to entitle them to advise me on the subject. They are Professors Headlam, Lock, Watson and Turner. I asked them to give their opinion whether there was sufficient ground for making it necessary for me to proceed to a more formal enquiry.

‘ One of the Professors (Professor C. H. Turner) demurred to being asked to give a considered opinion on the ground (1) that he did not feel it quite fitting that a layman should advise, *theologically*, in the matter of proceedings against a clergyman; (2) that he did not

feel himself qualified to pronounce, theologically, on this particular matter; (3) that in published works, especially in the concluding pages of a paper read at the Anglo-Catholic Congress, he might be thought to have so committed himself as to preclude his approaching the question with an open mind.

‘ I did not feel that it would be reasonable or right to press Professor Turner further to allow himself to be placed in a false position. I accepted his demurrer.

‘ I gather that the Professors each considered Mr. Major’s reply and wrote their opinions separately, and then met in consultation. They agree in stating that there is not in their opinion sufficient ground for making it necessary for me to proceed with anything in the nature of a more formal enquiry. They have forwarded to me a full statement of their opinions, which I shall, of course, publish.

‘ In regard to the charge (2) of importing the teaching of a heathen mystic (Gautama) into the Christian religion, I accept Mr. Major’s emphatic denial. As the charge is not supported by any material evidence, I cannot find any basis for a charge of heresy on this count.

‘ In regard to (1) I accept the opinions submitted to me by the Professors, and I de-

cide to take no further steps in the way of formal inquisition. I am satisfied that Mr. Major's teaching does not conflict with what Holy Scripture reveals to us of the Resurrection of the Body. I do not find that Mr. Major denies the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body: in fact, he positively asserts his belief in "the full survival of all that constitutes whatever is essential to human personality; in short, all that is meant by personal identity."

'I notice the extreme candour and almost exaggerated emphasis with which Mr. Major declares that he cannot reconcile his teaching "with the Catholic tradition," in as much as he believes that the Catholic tradition is not compatible with the teaching of Scripture. I believe he is mistaken, and his mistake is due to the limited view he takes of Catholic tradition. This might well raise a point for argument between theologians. I cannot hold that it constitutes ground for establishing a charge of heresy against Mr. Major.

'I shall in the interests of all concerned in this matter publish the accusation you presented to me and Mr. Major's reply, together with the opinions of the three Professors and their letter. It will only be possible to do this in pamphlet form.

‘ My decision has been reached after the most careful consideration of all the bearings of your accusation and of Mr. Major’s answer, and with the firm conviction that in so deciding I am using “ the authority given to me not to hurt but to help.” ’

The question raised by the accusation of heresy and its dismissal, although it may seem unworthy of serious attention by secularists and sceptics, is yet of importance to members of the Church of England and to students of Church History. It demonstrates, I believe, the danger of excessive dogmatism on the part of the Church authorities. The Church authorities we believe to have been right when they taught the faithful to say : ‘ I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come ’ : but they were wrong when they insisted on the resurrection of the flesh as the preliminary to entrance upon that future life. In other words, the Church was right in insisting on the *fact* of the resurrection of the dead ; she was wrong in insisting upon a particular *mode* of that resurrection.

Herein is contained a timely and profitable warning to the Church in reference to other matters of Christian doctrine, which are at present vexing the minds of faithful and

thoughtful Christians. The doctrine of the Incarnation, the doctrine of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension, the doctrine of Eternal Judgment and the Second Advent, are all doctrines where the Church of England to-day will do well to make the clearest distinction possible between the *fact* and the *mode*, and to say in unmistakable and emphatic tones to her clergy and laity: The moral and spiritual realities to which these doctrines witness are of supreme and eternal value to Mankind: the forms which they assume in men's minds in particular ages are temporary and mutable. You ought as Christians to believe in the Incarnation of God in Christ, but whether by a Virgin Birth or by some other means is not essential to your Christian faith; you ought as Christians to believe that Christ triumphed over death and is now at the right hand of God, but whether by a physical resurrection and ascension or by a spiritual one is not essential to your Christian faith. You ought as Christians to believe that we shall all be judged by the moral and spiritual standards of Christ and that our future destiny and usefulness depend on our striving to conform ourselves to those standards now, but whether this judgment will take place at some Great Assize at the end

of the world, or whether it be a process begun in this life and extending into another is not essential to your Christian faith. You ought as Christians to believe in and work for the coming of the Kingdom of God; you ought to pray for and look forward to the triumph of Christ, but whether you expect that coming to take the form of a visible appearance of Christ on the clouds of heaven, or whether you look for the triumph of Christian principles and ideals in the personal, social and political life of humanity is not essential to your faith as Christians.

If the authorities of the Church of England will have the courage, notwithstanding accusations of betrayal of the Christian Faith and threats of secession to the Church of Rome, to proclaim this policy in unflinching language and in stentorian tones, a great future of moral and spiritual influence offers itself to the ancient Church in this land.

I venture to think with all humility that a right step was taken in this policy of separating *facts* from *modes*, and *essentials* from *non-essentials*, by the decision of the Bishop of Oxford in my own case. That decision indicates that the Church of England to-day no longer insists on the primitive and mediaeval belief that the corpse laid in the grave will

rise again at the Last Day, although many generations of faithful Churchmen have lived and died in that conviction.

One practical result may, I hope, speedily follow in consequence of the Bishop of Oxford's decision. Our beautiful and impressive Prayer Book Services for the Burial of the Dead were composed under the influence of this discarded conviction. Thoughtful Churchmen may reasonably look for some revised or alternative Burial Services which, while expressing the Christian conviction in the Resurrection of the Dead and the Life of the World to come, will not connect it in the popular mind with belief in what Frederick Denison Maurice called 'a Resurrection of Relics.'

HENRY D. A. MAJOR.

RIPON HALL,

OXFORD.

Epiphany, 1922.

POSTSCRIPT.

In dealing with certain citations from the writings of the ex-Principal of Leeds Clergy School and the present Vice-Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College, I have used the phrase 'a sin against sincerity.' In using these words I did not mean to accuse these theological teachers of *conscious* insincerity, but rather of falling victims to that seductive temper of mind which is unable to see awkward historical facts if they do not fit in with their own ecclesiastical theories.

H. D. A. M.

RIPON HALL,
OXFORD,
10th December, 1921.

*To the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of
Oxford.*

MY LORD BISHOP,

The passage from the *Church Times* cited by the Rev. CHARLES EDWARD DOUGLAS, and on which he bases his charge against me, is accurately cited, and expresses precisely not only my conviction, but what has been the tenour of my teaching for some years past.

The accusation of 'importing the teaching of a heathen mystic (Gautama) into the Christian religion,' inasmuch as it is unsupported by the citation of any passage from my writings or oral teaching, I am compelled to meet with a general and emphatic denial.

Regarding the charge of 'openly teaching doctrine concerning the Resurrection which is contrary to the Christian religion as set forth :

- (a) in the Ancient Creeds of the said Province contained in the Book of Common Prayer,

(b) in Holy Scripture where the Resurrection of the Body is taught explicitly and is a vital element in the general theological and philosophical system,' it is necessary :

First, to pass in review the history and interpretation of the article in the Creeds which deals with the resurrection of ' the flesh,' ' the body,' ' the dead.'

Secondly, to examine the teaching of the Creeds in the light of Holy Scripture.

Thirdly, to show that my statement that ' the survival of death by a personality which has shed its physical integument for ever ' cannot be rightly censured by the authorities of the Church of England as ' contrary to the Christian religion.'

I.¹

Of the Western Creeds, the most important is the Ancient Baptismal Creed of the Church of Rome, commonly known in later times as the Apostles' Creed. Its date is uncertain, but a few years before or after 100 A.D. may

¹ For this section I have used mainly Hahn's *Bibliothek der Symbole*, 3rd ed. (1897, Breslau), Burn's *Introduction to the Creeds* (1899), and Heurtley's *De Fide et Symbolo*, 5th ed. (1902).

with some probability be regarded as the period of its origin.

This Creed, in the earliest forms in which we have it, ended with the phrase *carnis resurrectionem*, *carnis resurrectione*, or *carnis resurrectionis*.² Tertullian (c. 200 A.D.) gives us three forms of it: *et carnis resurrectionem* or *carnis etiam resurrectionem*, *cum carnis restitutione*. Marcellus of Ancyra gives it as *σαρκὸς ἀνάστασις*. As the language of the early Church of Rome was Greek, this is almost certainly the original form. This form is supported by the Baptismal Interrogatories of the ancient Roman Church, wherein the neophyte professes his belief in *carnis resurrectionem* (Palmatus at the beginning of the third century, Nemesius and his daughter about 259 A.D., Venustianus about 303 A.D.). This form also occurs in the *Sacramentary of Gelasius* (492—496 A.D.) and in the *Ordo Romanus*, where, as in the *Catechismus Romanus* (1564 A.D.), it is followed by *et vitam aeternam*.

The earliest Creed of the African Church had the form *resurrectionem carnis*, but St. Augustine, under the pressure of the Donatist schism, expands it into *resurrectionem carnis*

² The significance of the Greek and Latin phrases in this section is summarized at its conclusion.

et vitam aeternam per sanctam ecclesiam. Fulgentius of Ruspe, a century later, follows Augustine, and presumably this was the form in which the resurrection was confessed in the African Church until the conquests of Islam removed that Church's candlestick.

The Creed of the Church of Milan in the days of St. Ambrose ends with the words *carnis resurrectionem.*

The Creed of the Church of Turin in the fifth century has the same form, as also that of the Church of Florence.

The Creed of the Church of Ravenna (c. 433 A.D.) has the same, but followed by *et vitam aeternam.*

The Creed of the Church of Aquileia, according to Rufinus, has the emphatic form *huius carnis resurrectionem.* This form is also found in the West in the *Missale Florentinum*: in the Creed of Nicetas of Remesiana: in a Creed conjecturally assigned by Hahn to Phoebadius, Bishop of Agen in Aquitania (358—392 A.D.): and also in the Mozarabic Liturgy.

The Mozarabic Liturgy is an exception to the usual Spanish form, which according to Martin of Braga and Ildefonsus of Toledo follows the Roman Creed. Even the here-

tical Priscillian³ professes belief in *resurrectionem carnis*.

Venantius Fortunatus, Bishop of Poitiers and representative of the ecclesiastical tradition of Gaul at the end of the sixth century, gives the clause as *resurrectionem carnis*.

In three forms of the Creed extracted by Hahn from a seventh century Gallican Sacramentary the form is *carnis resurrectionem*. In a Gallican Missal of the same date the form is the same.

In a Norman-French Creed of the twelfth century the form is *resurrectiun de charn*.

The Early British Creed of Pelagius has the form *resurrectionem carnis*. A seventh century Irish Creed has *carnis resurrectionem*.

The English Church has the clause in successive periods in the following forms :

LATIN AND ANGLO-SAXON CREEDS :

Ninth century : *Resurrectionem carnis—
Flaescas aeriste*.

1125 A.D. : *Resurrectionem carnis—Flesces
up arisnesse*.

OLD ENGLISH CREEDS :

Thirteenth century : *Fleiss uprising*.

Fourteenth century : *Agenrisyng of fleisch*.

³ The first Christian executed for heresy.

Fourteenth century: *Rusyng of flech.*

Fifteenth century: *Risyng of flesshe.*

1536 A.D.: *Resurrection of the flesshe.*

In 1539 a change occurs. In Hilsey's *Primer* of that year 'body' is substituted for 'flesh,' and this rendering is followed in *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christian Man*, set forth by Royal Authority in 1543. When, in 1549, the Church of England drew up her reformed Daily Offices, she altered 'flesh' to 'body' in the Apostles' Creed as recited in them, but retained 'flesh' in the Baptismal Service and in the Visitation of the Sick—the only two occasions on which the Church of England requires an individual assent to the Creed.

This phrase 'resurrection of the body' had already appeared, according to Hahn, in certain vernacular German forms of the twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—*urstende mines libes*. The nearest precedent to this form is the *cum corporibus suis* of the Quicunque Vult and the *communem omnium corporum resurrectionem post mortem* of a single Gallican Creed of the sixth or seventh century. There is also a single African Creed of unknown origin, possibly

sixth century, which has *resurrectionem omnium hominum*.

Leaving now the Apostles' Creed and turning to the Eastern Churches, we find that before the days of Cyril of Jerusalem (c. 348 A.D.), the ancient Baptismal Creed of Jerusalem consisted of but four clauses: 'I believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Spirit, and in one baptism of repentance.' In Cyril's time, we find that the Creed has become expanded to twelve clauses, of which the last is '*and in the resurrection of the flesh* (σαρκὸς) *and in eternal life.*'

The *Apostolical Constitutions* (c. 348 A.D., Heurtley) contain a Baptismal Creed with the article 'in the resurrection of the flesh' (εἰς σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν), but 'in the resurrection from the dead' (τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν) appears in the Creed of Alexander of Alexandria as early as 326 A.D.

Epiphanius of Salamis (c. 374 A.D.) gives this article in the Revised Creed of Jerusalem in the form 'the resurrection of the dead' (ἀνάστασιν νεκρῶν). From this time forward, Hort asserts in his *Two Dissertations* (pp. 80, 91), 'σάρκος (flesh) is absent from all known revised Eastern Creeds' (including the Œcu-

menical Symbol). It is, however, interesting to note that the shorter Coptic Creed and the Ethiopian Creed have *carnis resurrectionem*: but the Armenians (converted by a disciple of Origen) have 'the resurrection of the dead.'

The evidence from West and East admits of the following conclusions:

(1) Up to the fourth century no other form for this article is known than 'the resurrection of the flesh.'

(2) Early in the fourth century, doubtless under the influence of Origen, we have the appearance in the Eastern Creeds, following the Creed of Alexandria, of the form 'the resurrection of the dead.'

(3) This form⁴ passes, through the Revised Creed of Jerusalem, into the Œcumenical Symbol, and so into the Liturgy, when in the fifth and sixth centuries the Creeds begin to be publicly recited.

(4) Throughout the whole of the West, with insignificant local exceptions, the Baptismal form has always been, as it is to this day, 'the resurrection of the flesh.'

⁴ *I.e.* 'the resurrection of the dead.'

II.

A Creed expresses a common belief, but what that belief was can only be learnt precisely by examining the testimony of those who framed it, revised it, expanded it, and recited it.

We have now, therefore, to investigate the meaning which representative Churchmen gave to the terms 'resurrection of the flesh,' 'resurrection of the body,' 'resurrection of the dead.'

We will begin with the earliest Father of the Western Church.⁵ ST. CLEMENT OF ROME (95 A.D.), in his *Epistle to the Corinthians*, written in the name of the Church of Rome, in c. 26, cites *Job* xix, 26, in the following form :

'Thou shalt raise this my flesh (τὴν σάρκα μου ταύτην) which hath endured all these things.'

in support of the doctrine of the Resurrection, for which he has already (c. 25) cited the marvellous sign of the Phoenix.

Our next citations are from ST. IRENAEUS, whose testimony is of the weightiest in this matter. As a bishop of Lyons and Vienne in

⁵ For the quotations from the Ante-Nicene Fathers I have mainly used the Library ed. by Roberts and Donaldson (T. and T. Clark) and also Lightfoot's editions.

the days of Marcus Aurelius, as a well-known figure in Rome, as a pupil of Polycarp of Smyrna, the pupil of John of Ephesus, he represents the Church tradition of Gaul, Italy and Asia in the middle of the second century.

In his controversy with the Gnostics he writes :

‘Just as a cutting from the vine planted in the ground fructifies in its season, or as a corn of wheat falling into the earth and becoming decomposed, rises with manifold increase by the Spirit of God, who contains all things, and then, through the wisdom of God, serves for the use of men, and having received the Word of God becomes the Eucharist, which is the body and blood of Christ; so also our bodies, being nourished by it and deposited in the earth, and suffering decomposition there, shall rise at the appointed time, the Word of God granting them resurrection to the glory of God, even the Father, who freely gives to this mortal immortality, and to this corruption incorruption.’ (*Adv. Haer*, Bk. 5, c. 2.)

‘If He does not vivify what is mortal and does not bring back the corruptible to incorruption, He is not a God of power. But that He is powerful in all these respects, we ought to perceive from our origin, inasmuch as God, taking dust from the earth, formed man. And surely it is much more difficult and incredible, from non-existent bones, and nerves, and veins and the rest of man’s organisation, to bring it about that all this should be, and to make man an animated and rational creature, than to reintegrate again that which had been created and afterwards decomposed into earth (for the reasons already given), having thus passed into those (elements) from which man, who had no previous

existence, was formed. For He who in the beginning caused him to have being who as yet was not, just when he pleased, shall much more reinstate again those who had a former existence, when it is His will (that they should inherit) the life granted by Him.'

(*Ibid*, Bk. 5, c. 3.)

In the same book, c. 9, he condemns especially those who would pervert the text, 'Flesh and blood shall not inherit the Kingdom of God,' by interpreting it so as to deny the resurrection of the flesh.

JUSTIN MARTYR, who represents the Church tradition of Asia and Rome, writes thus in his *First Apology*, about the middle of the second century :

'Such favour as you grant to these' (the opinions of Plato and others) 'grant also to us, who not less but more firmly than they believe in God; since we expect to receive again our own bodies, though they be dead and cast into the earth, for we maintain that with God nothing is impossible.' (c. 18.)

'In the same way, then, you are now incredulous because you have never seen a dead man rise again. But as at first you would not have believed it possible that such persons could be produced from the small drop (of human seed) and yet now you see them thus produced, so also judge ye that it is not impossible that the bodies of men, after they have been dissolved and like seeds resolved into earth, should in God's appointed time rise again and put on incorruption.' (c. 19.)

We also have a fragment of a *Treatise on the Resurrection*, quoted by St. John Damas-

cene as the work of Justin Martyr. Whether it be genuine or not, at least it is early and, for our purpose, important. The following extract summarises its teaching :

‘ The resurrection is a resurrection of the flesh which died. For the spirit dies not : the soul is in the body, and without a soul it cannot live. The body, when the soul forsakes it, is not. For the body is the house of the soul, and the soul the house of the spirit. These three, in all those who cherish a sincere hope and unquestioning faith in God, will be saved. Considering, therefore, even such arguments as are suited to this world, and finding that, even according to them, it is not impossible that the flesh is regenerated ; and seeing that, besides all these proofs, the Saviour in the whole Gospel shows that there is salvation for the flesh, why do we any longer endure those unbelieving and dangerous arguments, and fail to see that we are retrograding when we listen to such an argument as this : that the soul is immortal, but the body mortal, and incapable of being revived ? For this we used to hear from Pythagoras and Plato, even before we learned the truth. If then the Saviour said this, and proclaimed salvation to the soul alone, what new thing beyond what we heard from Pythagoras and Plato and all their band, did He bring us ? But now He has come proclaiming the glad tidings of a new and strange hope to man. For indeed it was a strange and new thing for God to promise that He would not keep incorruption in incorruption, but would make corruption incorruption.’ (c. 10.)

See also especially c. 4 (where the question of deformities is discussed)—‘ The flesh shall rise perfect and entire ’—and c. 9.

Another Christian Apologist, ATHENAGORAS (c. 180 A.D.), devoted an entire treatise to the Resurrection, and thus states his argument :

‘Now, if the righteous judgment awards to both together its retribution for the deeds wrought; and if it is not proper that either the soul alone should receive the wages of the deeds wrought in union with the body (for this of itself has no inclination to the faults which are committed in connection with the pleasure or food or culture of the body), or that the body alone should (for this of itself is incapable of distinguishing law and justice), but man, composed of these, is subjected to trial for each of the deeds wrought by him; and if reason does not find this happening either in this life (for the award according to merit finds no place in the present existence, since many atheists and persons who practise every iniquity and wickedness live on to the last, unvisited by calamity, whilst, on the contrary, those who have manifestly lived an exemplary life in respect of every virtue, live in pain, in insult, in calumny, and outrage, and suffering of all kinds), or after death (for both together no longer exist, the soul being separated from the body, and the body itself being resolved again into the materials out of which it was composed, and no longer retaining anything of its former structure or form, much less the remembrance of its actions): the result of all this is very plain to everyone, namely, that, in the language of the Apostle, “this corruptible (and dissoluble) must put on incorruption,” in order that those who were dead, having been made alive by the resurrection, and the parts that were separated and entirely dissolved having been again united, each one may, in accordance with justice, receive what he has done by the body, whether it be good or bad.’

(Treatise on the Resurrection, c. 18.)

‘ It follows of necessity, there must by all means be a resurrection of the bodies which are dead, or even entirely dissolved, and the same men must be formed anew . . . ; but it is impossible for the same men to be reconstituted unless the same bodies are restored to the same souls. But that the same soul should obtain the same body is impossible in any other way, and possible only by the resurrection; for if this takes place, an end befitting the nature of men follows also.’
(Ibid, c. 25.)

The prolific and fiery TERTULLIAN (c. 200) must next be cited. His testimony is weighty. Cyprian, the great Archbishop of Carthage, always spoke of him as ‘ the Master,’ and not unjustly, for this African Father has left an impression on the doctrine of the Western Church second only to that of Augustine. Tertullian devotes a treatise, *De Resurrectione Carnis*, to our subject. This gives us a very complete account of his convictions in the matter. He argues (cc. 60—61) that even the characteristics of sex will be retained by the resurrection body, though the functions will cease: ‘ For the Judgment seat of God requires that man be kept entire.’ Not a little of what he wrote on the subject is unquotable. The following extract, however, gives an adequate statement of his belief :

‘ The resurrection of the dead is a resurrection of the flesh; for unless it were raised again, it were im-

possible for the flesh to be "killed in hell." But as a question may here be captiously raised about the meaning of "the body" (or "the flesh"), I will at once state that I understand by the human body nothing else than that fabric of the flesh which, whatever be the kind of material of which it is constructed and modified, is seen and handled, and sometimes indeed killed, by men. . . . If anyone imports into our argument some body of a subtle, secret nature, he must show, disclose and prove to me that that identical body is the very one which was slain by human violence, and then (I will grant) that it is of such a body that (our Scripture) speaks. If again, the body (or corporeal nature) of the soul is cast in my teeth, it will only be an idle subterfuge! . . . (Christ says of the sparrows) "not one of them falls to the ground without the will of God." (He says this) that you may believe that the flesh which has been consigned to the ground is able in like manner to rise again by the will of the same God. For although this is not allowed to the sparrows, yet "we are of more value than many sparrows" for the very reason that, when fallen, we rise again. He affirms, lastly, that "the very hairs of our head are all numbered" and in the affirmation He of course includes the promise of their safety; for if they were to be lost, where would be the use of having taken such a numerical care of them? Surely the only use lies (in this truth): "That of all which the Father hath given to me I should lose none"—not even a hair, so also not an eye nor a tooth. And yet whence shall come that "weeping and gnashing of teeth" if not from *eyes and teeth*?—even at that time when the body shall be slain in hell, and thrust out into that outer darkness which shall be the suitable torment of the eye. He also who shall not be clothed at the marriage feast in the raiment of good works, will have to be "bound

hand and foot"—as being, of course, raised in his body. So again, the very reclining at the feast in the kingdom of God, and sitting on Christ's thrones, and standing at last on His right hand and His left, and eating of the tree of life: what are all these but most certain proofs of a bodily appointment and destination?' (c. 35.)

He also argues very acutely that the text, 'Flesh and blood shall not inherit the Kingdom of God,' does not deny the *resurrection* to flesh and blood, but only denies the *Kingdom of God* to flesh and blood: his view being that the flesh and blood, having been raised, will put on immortality after the resurrection, and so will become able to inherit the Kingdom of God. On this, see c. 50.

The learned HIPPOLYTUS, who represents the tradition of the Roman Church about 220 A.D., writes:

'Thus far, then, on the subject of Hades, in which the souls of all are detained until the time which God has determined; and then He will accomplish a resurrection of all, not by transferring souls into other bodies, but by raising the bodies themselves. And if, O Greeks, ye refuse credit to this because ye see these (bodies) in their dissolution, learn not to be incredulous. For if ye believe that the soul is originated and is made immortal by God, according to the opinion of Plato, in time, ye ought not to refuse to believe that God is able also to raise the body, which is composed of the same elements, and make it immortal. To be able in one thing and to be unable in another

is a word which cannot be said of God. We therefore believe that the body also is raised. For if it become corrupt, it is not at least destroyed. For the earth receiving its remains, preserves them, and they, becoming as it were seed, and being wrapped up with the richer part of earth, spring up and bloom. And that which is sown is sown indeed bare grain; but at the command of God the Artificer it buds, and is raised arrayed and glorious, but not until it has first died, and been dissolved, and mingled with earth. Not therefore without good reason do we believe in the resurrection of the body. Moreover, if it is dissolved in its season on account of the primeval transgression, and is committed to the earth as to a furnace, to be moulded again anew, it is not raised the same thing as it is now, but pure and no longer corruptible. And to every body its own proper soul will be given again: and the soul, being endued again with it, shall not be grieved, but shall rejoice together with it, abiding itself pure with it also pure. And as it now sojourns with it in the world righteously, and finds in it nothing now a traitor, it will receive it again (the body) with great joy. But the unrighteous will receive their bodies unchanged, and unransomed from suffering and disease, and unglorified, and still with all the ills in which they died. (Fragment of *Discourse against the Greeks*, c. 2.)

So far the testimony to the resurrection is clear and unmistakable. It means one thing and one thing only: 'The flesh shall rise again, wholly in every man, in its own identity, in its absolute integrity' (Tert., *De Res. Carnis*, c. 63). The particles of the decayed body put in the grave, or wherever scattered, shall at the Last Trump be collected again and the

body of flesh reconstituted. This body of flesh and blood will then be fitted by various degrees of change for the conditions of the future life.

But at this point ORIGEN (186—253 A.D.), the brilliant head of the great Catechetical School of Alexandria, attempted to spiritualize this very materialistic conception of the resurrection. If the prevailing belief up to this time may be described as ‘the resurrection of relics,’ Origen’s may be described as ‘the germ theory of the resurrection.’ He affirmed that the animal body contains the life principle of the spiritual body and that this life principle, buried with the body, yet remains intact and at the resurrection will create for the individual the spiritual body. There will thus be an identity of form (*εἶδος*) between the present material body and the resurrection body, but the resurrection body will not be a body of flesh and blood. It is here that Origen differs from his predecessors and contemporaries. The body, according to him, rises glorified—a spiritual body: the body, according to them, rises a body of flesh and blood.⁶

⁶ Since writing the above I have been in communication with Canon R. B. Tollinton, whose book on Origen is in the press. He writes after giving many references: ‘The last passage [*De Prin.* II, x, 1—3, the one I selected for citation in the text] seems to

Origen deals with this subject in a number of passages (see esp. *Contra Celsum*, Bk. 5, cc. 18—24; *Selecta in Psalmos*, Ps. I, 5; *De Principiis*, Bk. 2, c. 10), but the substance of his theory is contained in the following passage :

‘ We now turn our attention to some of our own (believers), who, either from feebleness of intellect or want of proper instruction, adopt a very low and abject view of the resurrection of the body. . . . If they believe the Apostle, that a body which arises in glory, and power, and incorruptibility, has already become spiritual, it appears absurd and contrary to his meaning to say that it can again be entangled with the passions of flesh and blood, seeing that the Apostle manifestly declares that “ flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God, nor shall corruption inherit incorruption.” But how do they understand the declaration of the Apostle, “ We shall all be

me important. His opinion does not seem to have changed much between *De Prin.*, his early work, and *Contra Celsum*, a late one . . . I don’t think Origen is always very consistent, though on the whole, considering how much he wrote, the variation in his opinion is strikingly small.’ He writes further : ‘ Pamphilus (*Apologia*, especially c. vii,) said the critics were wrong who said Origen held a resurrection of the body, but not of the flesh—“ *resurgere carnem vero negare*.” Pamphilus is on the defensive and probably leaves some things unsaid.’ (See Bigg, *Platonists*, 1st ed., pp. 266 *sqq.*; Denis, *De la Philosophie d’Origène*, pp. 297 *sqq.*; Huet, *Origeniana Lib. II*, c. ii, q. ix; Redepenning, *Origenes* passages quoted as in Index.)

changed?" This transformation certainly is to be looked for, according to the order which we have taught above; and in it, undoubtedly, it becomes us to hope for something worthy of divine grace; and this we believe will take place in the order in which the Apostle describes the sowing in the ground of "a bare grain of corn, or of any other fruit," to which "God gives a body as it pleases Him," as soon as the grain of corn is dead. For in the same way also our bodies are to be supposed to fall into the earth like a grain; and (that germ being implanted in them which contains the bodily substance) although the bodies die, and become corrupted, and are scattered abroad, yet by the word of God, that very germ which is always safe in the substance of the body raises them from the earth, and restores and repairs them, as the power which is in the grain of wheat, after its corruption and death, repairs and restores the grain into a body having stalk and ear.'

(*De Principiis*, Bk. 2, c. 10.)

Origen's theory produced a great effect on many of his brilliant band of pupils, and there can be little doubt that it is responsible for the Creed of Alexander of Alexandria (326 A.D.) affirming 'the resurrection of the dead' instead of 'the resurrection of the flesh.' But it is of importance to note that Origen's view never gained more than a temporary and limited acceptance. From the first it was regarded by many eminent Churchmen as destructive of the Christian Faith in what was a peculiarly dis-

tinctive Christian doctrine: it was violently opposed in consequence: and at the beginning of the fifth century (401 A.D.) it was condemned as heretical.⁷

METHODIUS, Bishop of Lycia (martyred 311 A.D.), vigorously attacked Origen's teaching on the resurrection, in a treatise known as *De Resurrectione Animarum*, fragments of which are preserved by Epiphanius and Photius. It is in the form of a Platonic dialogue. The Origenist speakers deny the materiality of the resurrection body and urge that to insist on the literal resurrection of the same matter would lead to countless difficulties. Was a man only to rise with the emaciated body he might have at the moment of death, or was he to get back all the blood he had lost before, the hair and nails that had been cut off in his life-time? Or suppose the body of a man to be eaten by an animal, and the flesh of that

⁷ Dean Inge, in *The Philosophy of Plotinus*, Vol. I, p. 102, writes thus of Origen's view:—'It is not the empirical self which survives, but the Soul become Spirit, which will make a new house for itself the resurrection body,' to which he adds the footnote: 'This resembles the Pauline view of the resurrection, which differs widely, as every candid and attentive reader must acknowledge, from the later Catholic orthodoxy.'

animal eaten by another man so as to become food for his body, to whom would the common flesh belong in the resurrection? Methodius, as indeed other writers down the ages, gives serious answers to such questions. The following is a good specimen of his method and view :

‘ When He says that the saints shall, in the resurrection, be like the angels, we do not understand Him to assert that they will then be actually angels, but approaching the condition of angels. So that it is most unreasonable to say, “ Since Christ declared that the saints in the resurrection appear as angels, therefore their bodies do not rise,” although the very words employed give a clear proof of the real state of the case. For the term “ resurrection ” is not applied to that which has not fallen, but to that which has fallen and rises again ; as when the prophet says, “ I will also raise up again the tabernacle of David which has fallen down.” Now the much desired tabernacle of the soul is fallen, and sunk down into the dust of the earth. For it is not that which is not dead, but that which is dead, that is laid down. But it is the flesh which dies ; the soul is immortal. So then, if the soul be immortal, and the body be the corpse, those who say there is a resurrection, but not of the flesh, deny any resurrection ; because it is not that which remains standing, but that which has fallen and been laid down, that is set up, according to that which is written, “ Does not he who falls rise again, and he who turns aside return? ” ’ (c. 12.)

As was to be expected, ‘ the sleuth-hound of heresy,’ EPIPHANIUS OF SALAMIS (315—404

A.D.) was not slow to join in the controversy. He hunted Origenism to its stronghold in Palestine, and more than anyone else was instrumental in discrediting Origen's teaching throughout Egypt and the East. He effected the conversion of Jerome from a mild form of Origenism, and that militant Churchman now became as violently antagonistic to Origen's teaching as Epiphanius himself. The spirit which prompted the reaction against Origenism is well preserved in the following extract from Jerome's *Apology against Rufinus*.

Rufinus had been guilty of translating some of Origen's works into Latin, and had urged that whether *caro* be used, as in the Creed (*secundum communem fidem*), or *corpus*, as by the Apostle, yet the belief must coincide with that of the Apostle.

JEROME writes in indignation :

‘What ! you will say, was not the question about the resurrection of the flesh and the punishment of the devil? True : and therefore I ask for a brief and sincere answer. I raise no question as to your declaration that it is this very flesh in which we live which rises again, without the loss of a single member, and without any part of the body being cut off (for these are your own words). But I want to know whether you hold, what Origen denies, that the bodies rise with the same sex with which they died ; and that Mary will still be Mary and John be John ; or

whether the sexes will be so mixed and confused that there will be neither man nor woman, but something which is both or neither; and also whether you hold that the bodies remain uncorrupt and immortal, and, as you acutely suggest after the Apostle, spiritual bodies forever; and not only the bodies, but the actual flesh, with blood infused into it, and passing by channels through the veins and bones—such flesh as Thomas touched; or that little by little they are dissolved into nothing, and reduced into the four elements of which they were compounded. This you ought either to confess or deny, and not to say what Origen also says, but insincerely, as if he were playing upon the weakness of fools and children, “without the loss of a single member or the cutting off of any part of the body.” Do you suppose that what we feared was that we might rise without noses and ears . . .’ (The remained of this passage is unquotable.) (Bk. 2, c. 5.)⁸

A careful examination of the writings of RUFINUS indicates, however, that he held the resurrection of the flesh as firmly as any of the primitive Saints. The following extracts from his *Apology*, written in 400 A.D., will show this :

‘How can we truly believe in the resurrection of the flesh, unless the very nature of the flesh remains in it truly and substantially? It is then without any equivocation that we confess the resurrection of this real and substantial flesh of ours in which we live. Moreover, to give a fuller demonstration of this point, I will add one thing more. It is the compulsion of those who calumniate me which forces me to exhibit a

⁸ For Jerome, Rufinus and Anastasius I have used mainly the Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers ed. by Wace and Schaff (Parker, Oxford).

singular and special mystery of my own church. It is this, that, while all the churches thus hand down the Sacrament of the Creed in the form which, after the words 'the remission of sins' adds "the resurrection of the flesh," the holy church of Aquileia (as though the Spirit of God had foreseen the calumnies which would be spoken against us) puts in a particular pronoun at the place where it delivers the resurrection of the dead; instead of saying as others do "the resurrection of the flesh," we say "the resurrection of *this* flesh." At this point, as the custom is at the close of the Creed, we touch the forehead of this flesh with the sign of the cross, and with the mouth of this flesh, which we have so touched, we confess the resurrection; that so we may stop up every entrance through which the poisoned tongue might bring in its calumnies against us. Can any confession be fuller than this? Can any exposition of the truth be more perfect than this? Yet I see that this remarkable provision of the Holy Spirit has been of no profit to us. Evil and busy tongues still find room for cavilling. Unless, says he, you name the members one by one, and expressly designate the head with its hair, the hands, the feet . . . you have denied the resurrection.' (Bk. 1, cc. 4-5.)

'The faith of the Church, of which we are the disciples, takes a middle path between two dangers: it does not deny the reality of the natural flesh and body when it rises from the dead, but neither does it assert, in contradiction to the Apostle's words, that in the kingdom which is to come corruption will inherit incorruption.' (c. 8.)

'I have made answer more at length than I had intended on this single article of the resurrection, through fear lest by brevity I should lay myself open to fresh aspersions. Consequently, I have made men-

tion again and again not only of the body, as to which cavils are raised, but of the flesh: and not only of the flesh: I have added "this flesh": and further, I have spoken, not only of "this flesh," but of "this natural flesh": I have not even stopped there, but have asserted that not even the completeness of the several members have been lacking. I have only demanded that it should be held as part of the faith that . . . it should rise incorruptible . . . glorious . . . immortal, spiritual.' (c. 9.)

ANASTASIUS, Pope of Rome 398—403 A.D., hurled his thunderbolt at the discredited Origenists in 401 A.D. His attitude is well set out in his *Letter to John of Jerusalem*. Rufinus had been ordained by the latter, and had claimed that his doctrine was that preached at Jerusalem. Anastasius writes:

'If the translator (Rufinus) intends by it to put the author (Origen) in the wrong, and to denounce to the world his execrable deeds, well and good. In that case he will expose to well-merited hatred one who has long laboured under the adverse weight of public opinion. But if by translating all these evil things he means to give his assent to them, and in that sense gives them to the world to read, then the edifice which he has reared at the expense of so much labour serves for nothing else than to make the guilt the act of his own will, and to give the sanction of his unlooked for support to the overthrow of all that is of prime importance in the true faith as held by Catholic Christians from the time of the Apostles till now. Far be such teaching from the catholic system of the Church of Rome. It can never by any possibility come to pass that we should accept as reasonable things which we condemn

as matters of law and right. . . . "Moreover, I cannot pass over in silence an event which has given me great pleasure, the decree issued by our Emperors, by which every one who serves God is warned against the reading of Origen, and all who are convicted of reading his impious works are condemned by the imperial judgment." [Anastasius is here quoting a letter to the Bishop of Milan, Venerius.] In these words my formal sentence was pronounced.' (cc. 4 and 5.)

'In any case I beg you to be assured of this, that he (Rufinus) is so completely separated from all part or lot with us, that I neither know nor wish to know either what he is doing or where he is living. I have only to add that it is for him to consider where he may obtain absolution.' (c. 6.)

Roma locuta est, causa finita est.

III

The Origenistic controversy elucidates two important facts: (1) that the phrase 'resurrection of the body' was a novelty in the Church, due to the influence of Origen's teaching (see Jerome, *Ep.* 30, *ad Pammachium*). (2) That there was the strongest objection on the part of orthodox theologians to the phrase 'the resurrection of the body.' Ancient theologians were not so fond as their modern successors of ambidexterity of meaning; and the word 'body' was ambidextrous, as Jerome forcibly points

out in his *Epistle* (41) to *Pammachius and Oceanus*.

‘We believe, say they, in the future resurrection of the body. This is well said if it be a sincere confession; but . . . they say “body,” not “flesh,” so that the orthodox man hearing “body” counts it to be “flesh,” but the heretical man recognises it as spirit (*haereticus spiritum recognoscat*).’

The result of the controversy is well summarized in the following statements by HARNACK:

‘Origen’s doctrine was more and more regarded as heretical from the end of the fourth century, while previously recognised theologians, like Gregory of Nyssa, had reproduced it in all its main points. Its rejection marks the first decisive victory of traditionalism—itself indeed impregnated with speculation—over spiritualising speculation. In the fifth century, there were counted as heretical:

- (1) The doctrine of *apokastastasis* (universalism) and the possibility of the redemption of the devil;
- (2) The doctrine of the complete annihilation of evil;
- (3) The conception of the penalties of hell as tortures of conscience;
- (4) *The spiritualising version of the resuscitation of the body*; and
- (5) The idea of the continued creation of new worlds.’

(*Hist. of Dogma*, E.T., Vol. 3, pp. 186-7.)

[*Italics mine.*]

‘The Cappadocians and some later Greek theologians still held, though in a much weakened form, to the spiritualistic version of the doctrine attempted by

Origen. But, following Methodius, Epiphanius (H. 64, ch. 12ff) especially insisted that there was the most perfect identity between the resurrection body and our material body, and this faith, enforced in the west by Jerome, soon established itself as alone orthodox.'

(*Ibid*, p. 187, F.H.)

IV

The greatest authority for Western orthodoxy until the days of Aquinas is AUGUSTINE (360—430 A.D.). We have a clear statement of his belief in the *Enchiridion*, cc. 64—92. It is full of curious questionings which were to vex the minds of theologians for centuries after. For instance, he discusses the nature of the resurrection bodies of abortions and monstrosities (cc. 85—87), and whether fat men will rise again in their former fatness (c. 90). The following citation, however, gives the substance of his belief :

'Nor does the earthly material out of which men's mortal bodies are created ever perish; but though it may crumble into dust and ashes, or be dissolved into vapours and exhalations, though it may be transformed into the substance of other bodies, or dispersed into the elements, though it should become food for beasts or men, and be changed into their flesh, it returns in a moment of time to that human soul which animated it at the first, and which caused it to become man, and to live and grow.

‘And this earthly material, which when the soul leaves it becomes a corpse, shall not at the resurrection be so restored as that the parts into which it is separated, and which under various forms and appearances become parts of other things (though they shall all return to the same body from which they were separated) must necessarily return to the same parts of the body in which they were originally situated. For otherwise, to suppose that the hair recovers all that our frequent clippings and shavings have taken away from it, and the nails all that we have so often pared off, presents to the imagination such a picture of ugliness and deformity, as to make the resurrection of the body all but incredible. But just as if a statue of some soluble metal were either melted by fire, or broken into dust or reduced to a shapeless mass, and a sculptor wished to restore it from the same quantity of metal, it would make no difference to the completeness of the work what part of the statue any given part of the material was put into, so long as the restored statue contained all the material of the original one; so God, the Artificer of marvellous and unspeakable power, shall with marvellous and unspeakable rapidity restore our body, using up the whole material of which it originally consisted. Nor will it affect the completeness of the restoration whether hairs return to hairs and nails to nails, or whether the part of these that had perished be changed into flesh, and called to take its place in another part of the body, the great Artist taking careful heed that nothing shall be unbecoming or out of place.’

(cc. 88-89.)

It should be pointed out that at an earlier stage Augustine's belief, doubtless under Manichaean and Neo-Platonic influence, was less

rigorously materialistic. It would appear, however, that after his experiments on the flesh of a peacock, and the discovery of its incorruptibility, his faith in the resurrection of the flesh was confirmed.

V

‘Later Latin writers,’ as Swete affirms (*The Apostles’ Creed*, p. 96), ‘followed Augustine, the only important exception being Johannes Scotus Erigena, whose philosophical mind rebelled against materialistic interpretations of the faith.’

ERIGENA’s doctrine of the resurrection is thus summarized by Miss Gardner (*Studies in John the Scot*, p. 108: *cf. De Div. Nat.*, Bk. 5, cc. 7, 21, 25): ‘By it he would imply not the perpetuation of what is merely sensible and fictitious, but the resolution of all that has any being at all into purer elements. The “death of the saints” which is “precious in the sight of the Lord,” is the absorption of the human soul in the Divine, for the death of the body is the first step towards the liberation of the soul.’

We may pass now to the teaching of St. THOMAS AQUINAS, who gathered up and restated in his dogmatic system the orthodox

theology of West and East.⁹ The *Supplementum* to the *Summa Theologica* in ninety questions deals with the resurrection and the resurrection body, so minutely that even the classification of the aureoles of Saints is discussed, and whether the worm of the damned be a corporal worm and their tears corporal tears.

Aquinas, basing himself on Aristotle, but developing his teaching in a way that would have astonished the Stagirite, argues that the soul being the form of the body, the body must rise entire to be a fitting habitation for the soul. Even nails and hair, in so far as they are needful for the perfection of human nature (and in a secondary degree they are necessary), will rise with the body. So also blood and the other liquids in the body, in so far as they are needful for the perfection of human nature, will rise with the body. His convictions on this point may be summarized as follows :

If anything be withdrawn from the human body which is really essential to human nature, the body of the man would not be perfect. Hence in the resurrection every human imperfection will be removed from the elect, to whom it is promised that not a hair of their head shall perish; therefore, whatever is really essential to human nature will rise with the man.

(*Summa*, Pt. 3, Q. 30, Art. 4.)

⁹ Aquinas used 56 Greek and 22 Latin Fathers.

When the quantity of matter which was attached to a man from the beginning of his life unto the end of it, shall exceed the quantity which is properly assigned to a human body, this excess shall not rise with him.

(*Ibid*, Art. 5.)¹⁰

The decisions of the COUNCIL OF TRENT in this matter, as they are authoritative for the largest Christian communion to-day, ought to be cited. They are found in a clear and simple form in c. 12 of Art. 11 of the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*:

Question 2.—*Why the Apostles called the resurrection of mankind 'the resurrection of the flesh.'*

And first that in this article the resurrection of mankind is called 'the resurrection of the flesh' is a circumstance that deserves special attention. For the Apostles had for the object of their teaching a necessary truth, *viz.* the immortality of the soul. Lest therefore, albeit the Sacred Scriptures in many places teach the soul to be immortal, anyone may imagine that it dies with the body, and that both are to be resuscitated into life, this article speaks only of *the resurrection of the flesh*. The word flesh (*caro*) it is true, often signifies in Scripture the whole man, as in Isaiah, 'All flesh is grass,' and in St. John, 'the Word was made flesh.' But in this place it is used to denote the body only: thus giving us to understand that of the two constituent parts of man, body and soul, one only, that is the body, is corrupted and returns to the dust of the earth, whence it was formed, while the

¹⁰ In making this summary I have used the Latin text of the *Summa*, published Luxembourg, 1848, Petrus Bruck Ed.

soul remains uncorrupt. As then without dying, a man cannot be said to return to life, so the soul cannot be said to rise again. Mention of the flesh is also made, in order to confute the heresy of Hymenæus and Philetus, who during the life-time of the Apostles asserted that whenever Scripture speaks of the Resurrection, it is to be understood to mean, not a corporeal, but a spiritual resurrection, by which it rises again from the death of sin to the life of innocence. That error, therefore, these words clearly exclude, while they establish the real resurrection of the body.

Question 7.—*The Human Soul will receive the very same body in the Last Judgment.*

But where, as it is of much importance for us to be fully convinced that the identical body that belongs to each one during life, shall, though it have been corrupted and dissolved into dust, be nevertheless resuscitated into life: this too is a subject that demands accurate exposition, &c. It is a truth conveyed by the Apostle when he says, ‘This corruptible must put on incorruption,’ evidently designating by *this* his own body. It is also most clearly prophesied by Job: ‘I shall see my God,’ says he, ‘Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold and not another.’ The same inference is drawn from the very definition of resurrection: for resurrection, as Damascenus defines it, *is a return to the state* from which one has fallen. Finally, if we consider the reason for a future resurrection, pointed out to us a little before, every doubt that can possibly occur on the subject must be at an end.

Question 9.—*The bodies will not resume the deformity contracted during this life.*

Not only will the body rise, but it will rise endowed with whatever appertains to the reality of its nature, and the symmetry and ornament of man. . . . For

those who from nature were blind, or who lost their sight through some disease, the lame, the maimed, and those paralysed in any of their members, shall rise again with an entire and perfect body.’¹¹

A modern authoritative Roman Catholic statement may be found in the article, ‘Resurrection,’ in the *Catholic Encyclopædia*. The following extracts are from the Catenian ed., vol. 12, pp. 789 ff.:

‘Resurrection is the rising again from the dead, the resumption of life. The Fourth Lateran Council teaches that all men, whether elect or reprobate, “will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear about with them” (Cap. *Firmiter*). In the language of the creeds and professions of faith this return to life is called resurrection of the body (*resurrectio carnis, resurrectio mortuorum, ἀνάστασις τῶν νεκρῶν*) for a double reason: first, since the soul cannot die, it cannot be said to return to life; secondly, the heretical contention of Hymeneus and Philetus that the Scriptures denote by resurrection not the return to life of the body, but the rising of the soul from the death of sin to the life of grace, must be excluded. . . .

‘*Dogma of the Resurrection.* The creeds and professions of faith and conciliar definitions do not leave it doubtful that the resurrection of the body is a dogma or an article of faith. We may appeal, for instance, to the Apostles’ Creed, the so-called Nicene and Athanasian Creeds, the Creed of the Eleventh Council of Toledo, the Creed of Leo IX, subscribed by Bishop Peter, and still in use at the consecration of bishops,

¹¹ These quotations are from T. A. Buckley’s trans. of the *Catechism* (1852).

the profession of faith subscribed by Michael Palaeologus in the Second Council of Lyons, the Creed of Pius IV, and the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council (c. *Firmiter*) against the Albigenses. This article of faith is based on the belief of the Old Testament, on the teaching of the New Testament, and on Christian Tradition.¹²

VI

We must now turn to the reformed Church of England. At the Reformation the Church of England departed on many doctrinal points from that portion of the Western Church which still submitted to the authority of the Roman Pontiff, but the English Church made no change in her doctrine of the resurrection. Controversy approached the subject when the lawfulness of Masses for the dead and the reality of Purgatory were fiercely debated, but the disputants remained united not only in their belief in the resurrection, but in their belief as to its mode. The evidence for this is many-sided and conclusive. It is true that the *First Prayer Book of Edward VI* and its successors substituted 'body' for 'flesh' in the Apostles' Creed as recited in the Daily Offices,

¹² The art. 'Resurrection' is written by A. J. Maas, S.J., Rector of Woodstock College, Maryland, U.S.A.

following in this *A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition*. But the context of the *Necessary Doctrine* makes it quite plain that no doctrinal change whatever was intended by this alteration of 'flesh' to 'body':

'At the day of the general doom or judgment, when Christ shall come (as in the seventh article of this Creed is contained), and sit to judge both quick and dead, Almighty God shall stir and raise up again the very flesh and bodies of all men, women and children, both good and bad, christened and heathen, that ever lived here in this world, from the beginning of the same, and died before that day. And although the said flesh and bodies were dead and buried, yea and consumed, or by any means destroyed, yet shall God of His infinite power make them all at that day whole and perfect again. And so every man generally shall resume and take again the very self-same body and flesh which he had while he lived here on earth, and so shall rise from death and live again in the self-same body and soul which he had before.'

(The *Necessary Doctrine* on Articles 11 and 12
of the Apostles' Creed.)¹³

BISHOP DOWDEN (*Workmanship of the Prayer Book*, 2nd ed.) thinks the change from 'flesh' to 'body' was due to the printers, but it is more likely to be due to the phrase 'resurrection of the body' being closer to the Pauline

¹³ The *Necessary Doctrine* may be found conveniently in *Formularies of the Faith put forth during the reign of Henry 8th*, ed. by C. Lloyd, 1825.

language than the phrase 'resurrection of the flesh.' Certainly the language of the Reformers gives not the slightest ground for supposing that in this point they had departed from the doctrine of the Catholic Church. CRANMER, the greatest scholar amongst the English Reformers, simply followed the Fathers of the Western Church in this matter, as the appended citation from his *Answer to Gardiner on the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper* indicates :

'What man that were learned in God's word would affirm, that in the general resurrection our bodies and souls should be all spiritual? I know that St. Paul saith that in the resurrection our bodies shall be spiritual, meaning in the respect of such vileness, filthiness, sin and corruption, as we be subject to in this miserable world: yet he saith not that our bodies shall be all spiritual. For notwithstanding such spiritualness as St. Paul speaketh of, we shall have all such substantial parts and members as pertain to a very natural man's body. So that in this part our bodies shall be carnal, corporal, real and natural bodies, lacking nothing that belongeth to perfect men's bodies . . . and as concerning our bodies, you run into the error of Origen, which fancied and imagined, that at the resurrection all things should be so spiritual, that women should be turned into men and bodies into souls.' (*On the Lord's Super*, p. 177.)¹⁴

¹⁴ The quotations from the Reformers are taken from the Parker Society's ed. of their works.

To the same effect is BISHOP HOOPER of Gloucester :

‘ I believe that this resurrection shall be of the flesh and not of the spirit ; that is to say, that the spirit or soul of man shall not rise, because it is immortal and dieth not : but the body, which before, as well by reason of nature, as also because of sin, was subject unto death and corruption, to rot and to be brought to ashes, shall be raised up, and shall be coupled with his own proper soul and spirit, and shall be set in a more perfect estate than that wherein the first man was before he sinned, and shall be clearly exempted from all manner of corruption of sin, and so consequently, from all manner of imperfections, and shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ. ’

I believe that I shall rise, not in any other man’s flesh and body, but in mine own that I brought out of my mother’s womb, even with the self-same body and bones that I have at this present, but the same altered and changed, made of mortal immortal, of corruptible incorruptible, of vile and contemptuous glorious. And therefore I do wait for the coming of my Saviour Jesus Christ ; the which through his power will change my vile body, which was but a cast-away, to make it like unto his own glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to subject all things to himself.’

(*A Brief and Clear Confession of the Christian Faith*, pp. 61-2.)

Bullinger’s *Decades*, ordered by the Convocation of Canterbury in 1586 to be read in churches weekly by non-graduate clergymen, contain the same doctrine. See particularly the ninth sermon of the First Decade on the Apostles’ Creed.

The Homilies affirm the doctrine, but do not go into particulars as to the mode.

BISHOP COVERDALE'S translation of Otho Wernmullerus' *Treatise on Death* definitely follows Jerome and Augustine, and, like Cranmer, he condemns Origen.

VII

The successors of the Reformers are as careful to enunciate the traditional doctrine of the Church as were the Reformers themselves. We need but cite two standard works : Bishop Pearson on the Creed and Bishop Burnet on the Articles :

BISHOP PEARSON writes :

'It will be necessary first to consider what are the essential characters and proprieties of a true resurrection. . . . The proper notion of the resurrection consists in this, that it is a substantial change by which that which was before, and was corrupted, is re-produced the same thing again. It is said to be a change, that it may be distinguished from a second or new creation. For if God should annihilate a Man or Angel, and make the same Man or Angel out of nothing, though it were a restitution of the same thing, yet were it not properly a resurrection, because it is not a change or proper mutation, but a pure and total production. . . . When a rational soul is separated from its Body, which is the corruption of a Man, that Soul so separated doth exist, and consequently is

capable of conjunction and re-union with the Body; and if these two be again united by an essential and vital union, from which life doth necessarily flow, then doth the same Man live which lived before; and consequently this re-union is a perfect and proper resurrection from Death to Life, because the same individual Person, consisting of the same Soul and Body, which was dead, is now alive again.'

(*An Exposition of the Creed*, Vol. I, Clarendon Press ed. 1797, pp. 382-3.)

'The Resurrection of the Body. . . . It will be necessary, for showing our agreement with the ancient Creeds, to declare that as by Flesh they understand the body of man, and not any other flesh; so we, when we translate it *Body*, understand no other body but such a body of flesh, of the same nature which it had before it was by death separated from the Soul. . . . These Bodies, as frail and mortal as they are, consisting of this corruptible flesh, are the subject of this article, in which we profess to believe *the Resurrection of the Body*.' (*Ibid*, pp. 561-2.)

'We must therefore undertake to show that the Bodies of Men, however corrupted, wheresoever in their parts dispersed, how long soever dead, shall hereafter be re-collected in themselves and united to their own souls. And for the more facile and familiar proceeding in this—so highly concerning truth—I shall make use of this method; first, to prove that such a Resurrection is not in itself impossible: secondly, to show that it is upon general considerations highly probable: thirdly, to demonstrate that it is upon Christian principles infallibly certain . . . therefore all Christians must firmly believe it.' (*Ibid*, p. 563.)

'But as it is necessary to a Resurrection that the flesh should rise, neither will the life of the Soul con-

tinuing amount to the reviviscence of the whole man, so it is also necessary that the same Flesh should be raised again.' (*Ibid*, p. 577.)

'We can therefore no otherwise expound this Article, teaching the *Resurrection of the Body*, than by asserting that the Bodies which have lived and died shall live again after death, and that the same flesh which is corrupted shall be restored; whatsoever alteration shall be made shall not be of their nature, but of their condition; not of their substance, but of their qualities. Which explication is most agreeable to the language of the Scriptures, to the principles of Religion, to the constant profession of the Church against the Origenists of old, and the Socinians of late.' (*Ibid*, p. 582.)

'Having thus discovered the truth of this Article, we may easily perceive what every man is obliged to believe, and understood to profess, when he confesseth a belief in the *Resurrection of the Body*; for thereby he is conceived to declare this much, I am fully persuaded of this as of a most necessary and infallible truth, that as it is appointed for all men once to die, so it is also determined that all men shall rise from death, that the Souls separated from our Bodies are in the hand of God and live, that the Bodies dissolved into dust, or scattered into ashes, shall be re-collected in themselves, and re-united to their souls, that the same flesh which lived before shall be revived, that the same numerical Bodies which did fall shall rise, that this resuscitation shall be universal, no Man excepted, no Flesh left in the grave, that all the Just shall be raised to a Resurrection of life, and all the Unjust to a Resurrection of damnation; that this shall be performed at the last day when the trump shall sound: and thus *I believe the Resurrection of the Body*.' (*Ibid*, p. 588.)

BISHOP BURNET holds the same doctrine, but appears to be more sensitive than Bishop Pearson to its philosophical objections. He writes :

‘ It seems probable . . . that the glory of the celestial body is of another nature and texture than of the terrestrial (1 Cor. xv. 10). It is easily imagined how this may be, and yet the body to be numerically the same ; for all matter, being uniform, and capable of all sort of motion, and by consequence of being either much grosser or much purer, the same portion of matter that made a thick and heavy body here on earth may be put into that purity and fineness as to be no longer a fit inhabitant of this earth, or to breathe this air, but to be meet to be translated into ethereal regions. . . . When all God’s design with this world is accomplished it shall be set on fire, and all the great parts of which it is composed, as of elements, shall be melted and burnt down ; and then, when by that fire probably the portion of matter which was in the bodies of all who have lived upon earth shall be so far refined and fixed as to become both incorruptible and immortal, then they shall be made meet for the souls that formerly animated them, to re-enter every one into his own body, which shall be then so moulded as to be a habitation fit to give it everlasting joy or everlasting torment.’

(*An Exposition of the 39 Articles* [1699], ed. 1840,
p. 77.)

Many more passages might be cited from English divines down to the middle of the nineteenth century, asserting the traditional doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh. I shall, however, confine myself to but one citation, and that from a standard Anglican

manual, the *Church Dictionary* of DEAN HOOK :

‘ We must therefore believe that this Resurrection, however apparently difficult, is not impossible, for with him by whom we are to be raised “ all things are possible.” We know that by him “ the very hairs of the head are all numbered ” ; and he “ who measures the waters in the hollow of his hand,” and “ comprehends the dust of the earth,” whose “ eyes ” could “ see our substance,” “ made in secret,” and “ yet being imperfect ” can be at no loss to distinguish the different particles of every different body, whether it be crumbled into dust, or dissipated into air, or sublimated by fire. He, too, the artificer of the body “ so fearfully and wonderfully made ” can be at no loss to re-unite the innumerable and widely scattered ashes ; for these shall not perish ; and with equal ease reform the man, as he originally made him.’

(Art. *Resurrection*, pp. 660-1, 8th ed., 1859.)

VIII

We are now in a position to attempt to summarize the meaning which the Church as a whole has given to the terms ‘ resurrection of the flesh,’ ‘ resurrection of the body ’ and ‘ resurrection of the dead.’

It is clear that the Church was not by these three phrases teaching three doctrines as to the mode of the resurrection, but one doctrine. By ‘ the resurrection of the *body* ’ and ‘ the resurrection of the *dead* ’ she meant neither

more nor less than she meant by 'the resurrection of the *flesh*.' Heretics might venture to suggest another meaning, but, as Jerome points out, the faithful knew but one meaning. The continuity and unanimity of the Church's teaching on the mode of the resurrection is remarkable. Here and there in Church history a solitary figure stands out in protest, like the great Origen and his disciples, or like that ingenious mystic Johannes Scotus Erigena. But the fate of such men needs to be remembered. Origen was condemned in East and West alike as a heretic, and the reading of his works forbidden by both Papal and Imperial decrees. The treatise *De Divisione Naturae*, in which Erigena expounded his eschatological doctrines, was condemned by Pope Honorius in 1225, and apparently absolutely forgotten until 1681, when it was discovered and printed by an Oxonian (Thomas Gale): whereupon it was at once placed on the Index. These men and their like stand in definite opposition to the *consensus fidelium* of eighteen centuries.¹⁵ In

¹⁵ Synesius, the Neo-Platonic Bishop of Ptolemais and contemporary of Augustine, agreed not to proclaim his belief in the mode of the resurrection out of respect for the feelings of the faithful, though he privately confessed that he did not believe the traditional doctrine.

the Church of England, the mode of the resurrection authoritatively taught in the middle of the nineteenth century differed not at all from contemporary teaching in the other great Churches of Christendom, and it differed not at all from the conviction of the persecuted Church of the Catacombs. The doctrine that the literal flesh would rise was affirmed in all the Western Baptismal Creeds, and defended in a series of learned treatises by Christian teachers of both East and West, who were well aware of its 'scientific' difficulties. Augustine declares that 'No doctrine of the Christian Faith is so obstinately opposed as is the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Flesh' (*in Ps.* 88, *Sermo.* 2). This doctrine was expounded in numberless sermons. We have it in *II Clement*, our earliest extant homily (c. 140 A.D.). This doctrine is equally the theme of Advent and Burial Hymns down the ages. The modern popular hymn by S. Baring-Gould, 'On the resurrection morning soul and body meet again,' does not differ in its doctrine of the resurrection from the majestic *Dies Irae* of Thomas of Celano in the thirteenth century, or the beautiful *Deus ignee fons animarum* of Prudentius in the fourth century. The doctrine is symbolized in burial customs, some of

which are as old as the Church herself. *Cemetery*, the primitive name for the burial place of the Christian dead, reminds us that the bodies of Christians are *sleeping* there until the Archangel's Trump shall wake them: there the Christian dead lie, their feet laid towards the East that they may rise facing the Coming Christ. The *Resurgam* inscribed on Christian tombs was no symbolic phrase, but a plain literal statement: the frescoes over the chancel arches of mediaeval churches vividly present the scene—the dead pushing up their coffin-lids and coming up out of the grave for judgment. When the pagan persecutors are described in the Letter of the Church of Lyons and Vienne (177 A.D.) as crying out when they flung the ashes of the martyrs into the Rhone, 'Now let us see if they will rise again, and if their God is able to help them,' the writer of the Letter comments thus: 'This they did, as if able to conquer God, and prevent their new birth, that, as they said, "they may have no hope of a resurrection"' (Eusebius, H.E. 5, 1). Though by this act the pagan persecutors were unable to triumph over Christian faith, they yet were doing something which was calculated to increase the difficulties of belief for the weaker Christian brethren, as the constant

Christian objection to cremation, except in the form of martyrdom, indicates.

This *catena* of Patristic testimonies would seem to show that there is no article of the Christian Faith which offers stronger testimony than the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Flesh, to the truth of Tertullian's great affirmation, *Credo, quia impossibile*.

IX.

I now propose to cite a series of passages from the writings of eminent Church of England theologians from the middle of the nineteenth century down to the present time.

FREDERICK DENISON MAURICE :

‘The Scripture says plainly, that Christ poured out His soul, as well as His body, to death. The description of His agony and crucifixion has been received by those who have believed it—practically, if not in name—as the history of the death of a soul as well as of a body. Those who have wished to represent His death as different from all others, for the sake of enhancing its worth, have dwelt upon this as its most wonderful characteristic. To me it seems the most wonderful, because from it I can learn what other deaths are—what the death of man is. Christ gave up all that was His own—He gave *Himself* to His Father. He disclaimed any life which did not belong to Him in virtue of His union with the Eternal God. It is

our privilege to disclaim any life which does not belong to us in virtue of our union with Him. This would be an obvious truth, if we were indeed created and constituted in Him—if He was the root of our humanity. We should not then have any occasion to ask how much perishes or survives in the hour of death. We should assume that all must perish, to the end that all may survive.

‘Such a conclusion would go far, I think, to help us through that terrible perplexity, into which I said we all fell, respecting the body and that which we commit to the ground. As long as we suppose the mystery of death to be the division of soul and body, so long we must cling, with a deep love, to those remains which yet we are forced to regard with a kind of loathing. We shall be ready to believe stories of miracles wrought by them; we shall be half-inclined to worship them. Or if we reject this temptation,—because Romanists have fallen into it, and we think it must therefore be shunned,—we shall take our own Protestant way of asserting the sanctity of relics, by maintaining that at a certain day they will all be gathered together, and that the very body to which they once belonged will be reconstructed out of them. That immense demand is made upon our faith,—a demand in comparison of which all notions of cures wrought at tombs fade into nothing,—by divines who would yet shrink instinctively from saying that what they call a living body here *is* a mere congeries of particles,—who would denounce any man as a materialist if he said that. This demand is made upon us by divines who use as a text-book of Christian evidences Butler’s *Analogy*, the ground chapter of which, “On the Future State,” is based on the argument that there is no proof that death destroys any of our living powers—those of the body more than those of the soul; and which distinctly calls our at-

tention to the fact that ordinary attrition may destroy the particles of which the matter of our bodies consists more than once in the course of a life; so that nothing can be inferred from our depositing the whole of that matter at the moment of dissolution. This demand is made upon our faith by divines who read to every mourner as he goes with them to the grave of a friend, that corruption cannot inherit incorruption; that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

‘But though I speak of this opinion as “a demand upon our faith,” I hold it to be the fruit of our unbelief. If we did attach any meaning to that expression upon which St. Peter at Jerusalem, St. Paul at Antioch, dwelt so earnestly, that Christ’s body saw no corruption,—if we did believe that He who was without sin showed forth to us in Himself what is the true normal condition of humanity, and showed forth in that body of His what the human body is,—we should not dare, I think, any longer to make the corrupt, degrading, shameful accidents which necessarily belong to that body in each of us, because we have sinned, the rule by which we judge of it here: how much less should we suppose these to be the elements out of which its high and restored and spiritual estate can ever be fashioned?’

‘It is impossible not to perceive, under this notion of a resurrection of relics,—of that corruption which our Lord did not see,—a very deep conviction that the body of our humiliation must be identical with the body redeemed and renewed. This conviction is so rooted in the heart, that it will absolutely force nature, fact, Scripture, everything, into accordance with it. I must be in all respects the same person that I was before I put off my tabernacle; *therefore* these elements, which were once attached to my body, must come from all the ends of the earth to constitute it.

What a witness for the reality of a belief, that it can sustain such a contradiction as this rather than cease to exist. All through my life on earth, soul and body are groaning together under a weight of decay and mortality,—are crying for deliverance from it. An hour comes which seems to say that their emancipation has taken place; that these Adam conditions belong no more to the man; that as to them he is utterly dead. The preacher of God's Gospel runs about saying, "Oh, no! it is a mistake! These witnesses of the fall,—these pledges of pain and shame, from which fever, consumption, cholera, after days or years of suffering, have at last set your friend free,—belong to him inseparably, necessarily, eternally. They *are* that body, the most curious, wonderful, glorious, of God's works; they are not, as your consciences tell you, as the Scripture tells you, the proofs that this wonderful fabric has suffered a monstrous and cruel outrage; that it needs a deliverer to raise it and renew it." A strange Gospel, one would think! And yet one which men receive, which they will continue to receive and hold, rather than think that they are to perish, or that they are to have merely a visionary soul-life. . . .

'If I did not feel that morality and godliness, and the practical belief of a judgment, were put into the greatest risk by the confusions which we are tolerating respecting these words, I would gladly pass them by. But I dare not be silent, because I see what a mass of unbelief and indifference is congealing in men's minds under a thin coating of apparent orthodoxy . . .

'I scarcely need ask any Protestant whether the words "Trump of the Archangel" convey to him precisely the impression which he would derive from the picture of Michael Angelo. He is likely to answer, with what I should think rather excessive and unnecessary indignation, that none of his impressions

are derived from pictures; that he has the greatest horror of their sensualising effect; that of course he does not dream of a material trumpet. I do not use this language myself. I *have* learnt from pictures, and am willing to learn from them. . . . But are we then to dismiss the phrase, as if it imported nothing to us, because we cannot reduce it to this signification, which would be actually nothing? I apprehend that it has the most serious import, and that the Scriptures tell us what it is. The Prophets of the Old Testament, in whose ears the trumpet that sounded loud and long on Sinai was ever repeating its notes, did not allow their countrymen to rest in the old image. Every rending of the mountains,—every earthquake, everything which idolaters looked upon as the sign of the wrath of the tyrant before whom they trembled, everything that the mere philosopher calls an ordinary convulsion of nature,—was with them an Archangel's trumpet, declaring that the righteous and everlasting King was coming forth to punish the earth for its iniquities, and to set truth and judgment in the midst of it. This was the teaching—the uniform teaching—of the old seers, in whose school St. Paul's mind was formed. . . . And everything which warned a man that such a day was at hand, which roused him to seek for light and to fly from darkness, was a note of the Archangel's trumpet—a voice bidding him awake, that Christ the Lord of his spirit might give him light. And in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, by a fit of apoplexy, by the dagger of an assassin, the vesture of mortality which hides that light from it might drop off from him, and he might be changed. What had merely sounded to him here as some common earthly note of preparation for death, would then be recognised as the Archangel's trumpet calling him to account, asking him whether the light that had been vouchsafed to him, whilst shadows were still

about him, had been faithfully used, or whether he had loved darkness rather than light, because his deeds were evil?'

(*Theological Essays* [1853], 5th ed., 1891, pp. 143-151.)

The late Bishop HARVEY GOODWIN, of Carlisle :

'Some have argued that the Christian Faith demands this miracle (the resurrection of the flesh, the rising of men with their own bodies) and have asserted that the same power which can restore life can bring limb to limb and particle to particle, as in the vision of Ezekiel, and so restore the identical material bodies which were once consigned to the tomb. This view of the possibilities of the future resurrection is mentioned here, because it is one which our present knowledge of matter and its laws renders it imperative upon all wise men to discard. Matter which appertains to one body at one time appertains to another body at another. The notion of particle being joined to particle, so as to re-form a certain body, involves an impossibility, because the same particle may have belonged to a thousand different bodies, and may be claimed by one as rightly as by another. In fact, it is only necessary to bring the notion into contact with what we certainly know concerning material particles to break down and annihilate it.'

(*The Foundations of the Creed*, 1889, 2nd ed., 1890, p. 384.)

'One result of accepting the arguments of this chapter must be to desire some modifications of the summing-up of the meaning and force of the article as given by Bishop Pearson. . . . It is submitted that this exposition is too materialistic, and that it mixes up the real and the figurative in a manner calculated to produce confusion of thought, and perhaps in these days to generate unbelief. The concentration of the

dust and ashes into which bodies have been dissolved, and the re-uniting them to their own souls, so that the same flesh which lived before shall be revived, is not so much an unfair tax upon human powers of believing, as the enunciation of a theory which a knowledge of the laws of matter shows to be untenable. The theory implies that the particles of matter into which a body has been resolved are reserved, in such manner as to be capable of identification and of being claimed for the soul to which they belong. This is not and cannot be so: and it had been well if all the language used in the exposition had been in harmony with the figurative words and phrases which occur in parts of it. Men's souls are *in the hand* of God: their bodies will rise *at the last day when the trumpet shall sound*: this rising will be the prelude to a judgment: there will be a resurrection of life and a resurrection of damnation. All this contains in forcible language, the more forcible because figurative and therefore capable of suggesting much which could not be expressed in actual words, the great mystery of the future of mankind; but when particulars are added concerning physical conditions, we feel not only that these physical conditions are impossible, but that their introduction mars the grand solemnity of the picture and ought not to have been made.' (*Ibid*, pp. 390-1.)

The late BISHOP B. F. WESTCOTT, of Durham :

'I believe in the resurrection of the flesh. But in shaping for ourselves this belief we need to use more than common care lest we allow gross, earthly, thoughts to intrude into a realm where they have no place. The "flesh" of which we speak as destined to a resurrection is not that material substance which we can see and handle, measured by properties of sense. It represents, as far as we now see, our-

selves in our actual weakness, but essentially ourselves. We in our whole being, that is our belief, shall rise again. And we are not these changing bodies which we see. They alter, as we know, with every step we take and every breath we draw. We make them, if I may so speak, make them naturally, necessarily, under the laws of our present existence. They are to ourselves, to use a bold figure, as the spoken word to the thought, the expression of the invisible.

For of the soul the body form doth take,
For soul is form and doth the body make.

When therefore the laws of our existence are hereafter modified, then we, because we are unchanged, shall find some other expression, truly the "Same" in relation to that new order, because it is not the same as that to which it corresponds in this.

'All imagery fails in some part or other to present a truth like this. But we should have been spared many sad perplexities, many grievous misrepresentations, if we had clung to St. Paul's figure of the seed in looking to our future resurrection. *We sow not, he tells us, that body which shall be.* There is then no question here of the re-gathering of material particles, no encouragement for unsatisfactory appeals to God's omnipotence. What St. Paul teaches us to expect is the manifestation of a power of life according to law under new conditions. *God giveth to every seed a body of its own*: not arbitrarily, but according to His most righteous will. The seed determines what the plant shall be, but it does not contain the plant. . . . The unbroken continuity shall enter into a new sphere, unaffected by the limitations through which earthly bodies are what they are. . . . Such a faith as this, even in its necessary vagueness, is sufficient to fill the heart of man. It substitutes for the monotony of continuance the vision of existence infinitely ennobled.

It substitutes for the abstract thought of immortality the rich fulness of a life in which all history and all nature finds its place. It leaves no room for the misgivings which haunt us when we people heaven with creatures of earth. It preserves the chastening thought that we may enter into life incomplete and maimed, if powers of vision or action or movement, the eye, the hand, the foot, in the language of the Gospels, have been lost because they were not consecrated. It helps us to feel how the forgiveness of sins will restore to men their true selves, disguised and hidden before. In this assurance we can look joyfully upon the removal of all that is transitory, *knowing that we have our own selves for a better possession and an abiding one.* We ask no more.'

(*The Historic Faith*, 1883, 6th ed., pp. 136-139.)

The Right Rev. CHARLES GORE, D.D., sometime Bishop of Worcester, Birmingham, and Oxford:

'*We know for certain . . . that death is not the end of life.* The human soul or spirit is at death separated from the dead body. The body rests in the sleep of death. The human spirit is said by our Lord "to live to God." What the life of our spirit without our body can be we cannot imagine. All that we know by experience is life *in* a body, and that is our natural state and will be our eternal state, for—

'*We believe for certain in the resurrection of the body.* This does not mean that the particles of our former bodies, which were laid in the grave and which have decayed and passed into all sorts and forms of natural life, will be collected together again; but it means that we in our same selves shall be re-clothed in a spiritual body which we shall recognise as our own unchanged selves. Anyway, God will give to each a

body as it shall please Him—a spiritual body (1 Cor. xv). In this life men of science assure us that every thought we think with our minds has corresponding to it a change in the material substance of our brains. But this correspondence of soul and body will be, we suppose, much more perfect in a spiritual body. The substance of the spiritual body will surely be as much more fine and delicate than our present body as the ether is more fine and delicate than common matter. Thus, our spiritual body will be simply the expression of ourselves. Here, we know, our body half conceals our true selves. There, all we are or think or feel will express itself (we must suppose) without effort or trouble or possibility of concealment or misunderstanding in our glorious, painless, resurrection bodies. At any rate, resurrection bodies we shall have—for good, and must I not say for evil also? For if our spiritual bodies then express and do not conceal our true selves, our very bodies may be our condemnation in that day of resurrection which is the resurrection of life to some, the resurrection of judgment to others (St. John v. 29).’

(The Creed of the Christian, 1895, 7th ed., pp. 92-93.)

The Rev. Canon CHARLES H. ROBINSON, D.D. :

‘The belief was widespread in early times that the material bodies of Christians would one day be literally resuscitated and would rise from their graves in a form visible to material eyesight. Thus Jerome, arguing from the statement “the very hairs of your head are all numbered,” held that there would be a restoration of the bones, veins, nerves, teeth and hair. Modern science, by showing that the particles of matter of which our present bodies are composed have previously formed part of the bodies of other beings, has rendered such a belief impossible. It has been computed that since the appearance of man upon earth

at least a hundred and fifty thousand million human beings have died. If a future resurrection should involve any movement of matter, many hundreds of persons would have to claim possession of the same particles of matter. Were we to admit that the particles of matter of which a body is composed at the time of its owner's death will be used up again or re-animated at the general resurrection, we should have to answer a somewhat repulsive question which is raised by the practice of cannibalism. In the general resurrection who will be entitled to lay claim to the particles of matter which have formed part both of the bodies of cannibals and of their victims? The only possible answer is that such a question will never need to be answered, because the resurrection will not involve any re-animation or movement of the particles of matter of which our bodies are composed. A further proof that the general resurrection will not involve the resuscitation of the particles of matter which may have belonged to any particular body at the moment of death is afforded by the comparatively recent discovery that the body is in a constant state of flux, and that its composition does not remain the same for two consecutive moments. It becomes therefore impossible to suppose that the particles of matter of which a body happens to be composed at the actual moment of death can by the occurrence of death be rendered immortal. What is immortal is not the matter of which the body is composed, but what Bishop Westcott has called the formula of which man's body is the outward expression. . . . In an age when physical science had hardly come to the birth, and when a man would have been excommunicated or put to death as a heretic had he ventured to suggest that the particles of matter of which his body was composed might already have formed part of the bodies of others who had lived and died before him, the only way by which

a belief in the preservation of human identity could be expressed in unambiguous terms was by the use of the language which was adopted in the creed. The significance of the language employed has been greatly modified by lapse of time and growth of knowledge, but the belief which the statement was framed to express is still the belief of the Christian Church; and though we may regard the words as inappropriate to express this belief, and may even desire to see them altered, nevertheless as long as we share this belief we can continue to use them without intellectual dishonesty.'

(*Studies in the Resurrection of Christ*, 1911, pp. 13-17.)

The late DEAN BEECHING, of Norwich :

'We may be grateful that in both the Creeds used in our daily Services the word "flesh" has disappeared. But whatever form of words we employ—the resurrection of the *dead*, of the *flesh*, of the *body*—we must go for their interpretation back to the Sacred Scripture. . . . We can say nothing about it (the spiritual body) but that it will not be flesh and blood, which belongs to this life merely. . . . What we really mean, then, by this profession of belief in the resurrection of the body is that complete "identity" is preserved between the human being before and after death, and not "identity" only, but "personality."'

(*Six Lectures in Westminster Abbey on the Apostles' Creed*, 1905, pp. 97-8.)

The Right Rev. H. H. HENSON, D.D., Bishop of Durham :

'The Resurrection of the body is central to St. Paul's system of morality. He draws a distinction between "the body" and "the flesh"; the one is destined to share the immortality of the "Spirit,"

which apart from it is "unclothed," and only truly lives when it has been "clothed" with that "building from God" which is a "spiritual body"; the other shall perish in the grave. These expressions have a moral connotation. Vice is an outrage on "the body," it is the "lust" of "the flesh." Thus he writes with religious horror of unchastity as implying a profanation of the undying self, a sacrilegious outrage on that "body" which is ordained to be "the temple of the Lord." St. Paul appears to regard this sin, and doubtless all sins of which this may be called representative, as inflicting a wound which persists in that life beyond the grave towards which we are moving, and which in some measure we possess even here on this side of "the great divide." He pictures life on earth as a contest in which the prize contended for is nothing else than "the resurrection from the dead." In a passage of extraordinary power and emotional intensity he bares his heart, and bids all the world take account of the forces which determine his troubled and militant course. What is the master motive, the prevailing purpose, the ruling thought, the key of his enigmatic career? It is, he says, his resolve to win the resurrection. "Yea, verily, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him . . . that I may know Him, and the power of His Resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, becoming conformed unto His death; if by any means I may attain unto the Resurrection from the dead." His suggestion is that this life on earth is a training school for another life, that we must learn here the language and laws of another world than this; that that other world is the native country of our true selves; that, therefore, just in proportion for our obedience to its laws, we

grow to our full stature, and qualify for our natural franchises, "for our citizenship is in heaven; from whence also we wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory, according to the working whereby He is able even to subject all things unto Himself."

'I need hardly remind you that this view of the Resurrection as the final triumph of a process not future but present, the disclosure of the full significance of all happenings of time, the full vindication of the answer of faith to the question of values, is thoroughly accordant with the recorded teachings of our Saviour. On one memorable occasion the subject was forced on His attention. The Sadducees approached Him with a question evidently framed with a view to bringing the doctrine of Resurrection to an obvious *reductio ad absurdum*. He rebuked them sharply for the gross materialism which inspired their imaginary problem about seven brethren dying in succession, and in every case obeying the archaic Levirate Law, who had but a single woman as wife. The question evidently assumed that resurrection was merely physical, a returning to the world of sense and time, there to come once more into the old situations, and pass again under the old conditions. "Jesus said unto them, Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the Scriptures, nor the power of God? for when they rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage but are as the angels in heaven." What was the truer doctrine which our Saviour adumbrated when He quoted the familiar words, so precious to every Jew: "But as touching the dead that they are raised have ye not read in the book of Moses, in the place concerning the Bush, how God spake unto him saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but of the

living : ye do greatly err." ? He did not mean that the Patriarchs had returned from their graves, and thus had escaped the physical dissolution which is the natural destiny of all material bodies, but that their obedience to the Divine Will had lifted them out of the physical into the spiritual sphere, and made them partakers of the everlasting life of God. They were, He said in effect, illustrations of the solemn truth that, though "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof," yet it is the case, and always has been since moral life was on earth, that "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

'Now this doctrine that resurrection is inseparably linked to morality, that, in truth, it is the prize of moral effort, the proper consequence of the spiritual life, and inseparable from it, explains the practical force which belongs to a genuine belief in the Resurrection. St. Paul's conclusion is as true to experience, as it is a legitimate deduction from his premises: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not vain in the Lord."'

(*The Creed in the Pulpit* (1912) pp. 212-214.)

The Ven. WILLOUGHBY C. ALLEN, D.D., sometime Archdeacon of Manchester :

'I believe that the clause about the resurrection also rightly sums up His (our Lord's) teaching, and suggests the truth that the individual personality persists whole and entire, body, soul and spirit, and will be "raised" to enter into a new order of things when this world has passed away.

'I cannot imagine why you ask me such a foolish question as "shall we ever come into contact with our bodies after they are once placed in their graves?"'

Have you never read St. Paul's statement "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God," or this "thou sowest not the body that shall be"? I do not suppose that we shall ever "come into contact" with the dead matter that is laid in the grave, nor imagine that it will enter the Kingdom, but none the less, I believe with St. Paul that we shall be raised into eternal life, body, soul and spirit, *i.e.* the complete beings that we are now. Indeed, I see little reason to suppose that men can ever cease to be constituted as they are now, though I do not doubt that they must be wholly spiritualised, yet in such a sense that "body" remains. If you tell me that "body" so spiritualised ceases to be "body," I can only retort that St. Paul thought differently.

"Resurrection of the body" seems to me to be a negation of the pagan, and also unscientific view that a man's spirit "can be separated from the totality which he is, and positively an assertion that, after death, man survives in all the elements that constitute his personality" (*cf.* Von Hügel, *Mystical Element in Religion*, Vol. I, pp. 194-5).'

(*Letter to the Ed. 'Modern Churchman,'*
March, 1913, p. 586.)

The Right Rev. F. H. CHASE, D.D., Bishop
of Ely.

'We do not believe that the idea of the resurrection of the body involves the idea of a collection of the scattered particles which together at the hour of death made up the body, or that the only real identity consists in a purely physical identity of material. If we venture to put into our own words what our hope is, they will, I think, take something of this shape. In the Resurrection we expect that the antithesis between spirit and matter will be done away and that, for

the full realisation of the personality of each man, God will bestow upon the spirit that which in the final world of realities corresponds to the body in the present world of phenomena. Or we thankfully adopt the language of St. Paul, "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body" (1 Cor. xv. 44). "We wait for a Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall fashion anew (μετασχηματίσει) the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of his glory, according to the working whereby he is able even to subject all things unto himself" (Phil. iii. 20 ff.).

(*The Gospels in the Light of Historical Criticism*, 1914, Preface, p. 32.)

The Rev. J. F. BETHUNE-BAKER, D.D., Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge:

"The resurrection of the flesh" expressed the actual belief of nearly all Christians till recent times. . . One of the questions regularly put to bishops in the public examination as to their faith which was part of the ceremony of their consecration, throughout, it seems, the Middle Ages, was even more explicit: "Dost thou believe," it ran, "in the resurrection of this flesh which thou now hast on thee?" The more general expression, "the resurrection of the dead," was of course in use in the Creed of the Eucharist, but individual teachers who shrank from the phrase "of the flesh" were always regarded with suspicion.'

(*The Faith of the Apostles' Creed*, 1919, p. 173.)

'Our faith in the resurrection of the body is our faith in the survival of our personal identity with the capacity for self-expression. . . . We can still use the clause in the religious sense it has always borne, although we do not believe that at a Last Judgment Day we shall appear at the Great Assize in the bodies

in which we now are. We can even use the vivid phrase of the ancient Creeds, and of our own Church in its most solemn act of admitting new members to its fellowship, and declare our belief in "the resurrection of the flesh" (or even "of *this* flesh"); if it is our faith that we ourselves in our human personalities, as we are in the days of our flesh, with all things appertaining to the completeness of man's nature—no bare and empty disembodied "spirits," but as we have been made by all our life's experience—will live again after death and "receive" the things done in the body, according to what we have done, whether it be good or bad.' (*Ibid*, pp. 175-176.)¹⁶

¹⁶ Dr. Bethune-Baker, after I had forwarded my letter to the Bishop of Oxford, kindly called my attention to the following expression of opinion by the late Rev. H. B. Swete, D.D., Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge:

'The word *σάρξ* may be applied to a spiritual body, if it is not assumed that the risen body will consist of the same flesh, or of flesh of the same character as that which we wear here; as St. Paul points out, *οὐ πάντα σὰρξ ἡ αὐτὴ σάρξ*: it is only the Aquileian *huius carnis* which is excluded by Origen's supposition. Nor does the "Resurrection of the body" involve the restoration of all the parts of the buried body, or, indeed, of any of them; there are *σώματα ἐπουράνια* as well as *σώματα ἐπίγεια*, and the analogy of the seed suggests a thorough change: *ὁ σπείρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον σπείρεις*.

'Thus Western Christians can continue to confess their faith in the "Resurrection of the flesh," or "of the body," although in the interpretation of the terms they have learnt to follow Origen rather than Tertullian, and perhaps, if the choice had rested with

In 1917 a volume on *The Meaning of the Creed* was published by the S.P.C.K. for the National Mission. I quote from the paper on *The Life after Death*:

‘The Christian belief (as to the Resurrection of the Body) has often been interpreted in a very materialistic fashion, with results which may fairly be described as “impossible” and “absurd.” For those who hold such interpretations are faced with a real difficulty when they are asked such questions as, “What happens to a man whose body has been eaten by a tiger?” or “In view of the fact that our bodies are completely renewed every seven years, which of the various bodies which we have possessed will be the one to rise again?” The Church has never endorsed any interpretation which would make such difficulties real. It is not bound by any misconstruction of its words which may have gained currency. Almost all Christian beliefs are liable to be interpreted wrongly because they are so wide and deep that it is not easy to grasp more than a small fraction of their true content. When we say in the Creed “I believe in the Resurrection of the Body,” what do we really mean?’

‘Briefly, we mean that ultimately we shall lose nothing by death.’ (pp. 249-250.)¹⁷

To conclude this series of extracts, I quote from the most recent Commentary on the

them, would have preferred to speak only of the “Resurrection of the dead.” ’

(‘The Resurrection of the Flesh’ in *Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 135 ff, 1917.)

¹⁷ The paper quoted is by the Reverend R. H. MALDEN, M.A., sometime Principal of Leeds Clergy School.

Thirty-Nine Articles, one which has been largely adopted by theological colleges and which may fairly be taken to represent the positive teaching now generally given to ordinands on this subject :

‘ When we express our belief in the “ resurrection of the body ” we do not mean that the actual material particles of which our bodies are composed at death will come together again, but that no part of our personality will be lost. It is true that many of the Fathers, as e.g. St. Augustine, taught that God’s almighty power would reassemble the actual particles of our dead body, but such an idea conflicts with all we know of our present condition and was, at the best, a pious opinion. In some forms of the Creed we even find the “ resurrection of this flesh,” a materialistic interpretation that happily was never adopted by the Church at large. We cannot form any conception of our future state except so far as it is shown in the person of the Risen Christ. As in His case, nothing that belongs to the perfection of our human nature will be lost. All that our present body stands for, will still be ours. We shall possess an organism adapted for life under future conditions as the body is adapted for life under earthly conditions. Our Lord’s body still bears the marks of the wounds (cp. Rev. v. 6). In Christ as in ourselves, the past still lives on in its permanent effect on what He is. So we believe that all we have become through moral effort in this life will endure in the life that is to be ours hereafter.’

(*A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles*, 1919, by the Reverend E. J. BICKNELL, M.A., Vice-Principal of Cuddesdon Theological College, Oxon, p. 132.)

X

No one acquainted with current theological thought will, I think, deny that these extracts are typical of the belief and doctrine of modern educated teachers within the Church of England. They are as typical of our day as the extracts I have given from the Fathers and Reformers are typical of their day.

Yet no one can fail to observe an astounding difference between the two series of extracts. The teaching of these modern English theologians constitutes in its assertions and implications an absolute denial of the Catholic doctrine as to the mode of the resurrection of the dead. For if there be a doctrine which can adequately meet those three great tests of Catholicity which St. Vincent of Lerins insists on in the *Commonitorium* (*cf.* especially c. 2)—antiquity, universality and consent—it is the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, a doctrine held by the whole Church from the first century down to the nineteenth century, and even to-day still held by the majority of Christians throughout the world.

But it will be clear from an examination of these extracts from our modern English theo-

logians that the doctrine of the mode of the resurrection which they hold is not the traditional Catholic doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh, which we have designated the 'resurrection of relics': neither is it the spiritualized version of the same doctrine which was taught by Origen, and which we have designated 'the germ theory of the resurrection.' We are not concerned here and now to elucidate what is the exact mode of the resurrection of the dead which these English theologians hold, but what they do *not* hold is quite clear. They do not hold the Catholic doctrine of the mode of the resurrection of the dead. What some of them mean precisely would be very difficult to formulate, since they use traditional terms in an untraditional sense, and disguise the fact that they have jettisoned the traditional doctrine by using the word 'flesh' without meaning this flesh, and by using the word 'body' without meaning the body put into the grave. This ambidexterity of meaning, which for a serious student of dogma is really 'intellectually intolerable,' is doubtless excusable in view of the transition through which Christian thought has been passing during the past three-quarters of a century. What, however, is not excusable is to pretend, as do some writers, that although

the resurrection of the flesh has been jettisoned there has yet been no important departure from Catholic doctrine in this matter. When it is said that 'The Church has never endorsed any interpretation (*i.e.* of the resurrection) which would make such difficulties (*i.e.* as are connected with the resurrection of the flesh) real,¹⁸ the writer is flatly contradicting the facts of history, and also contradicting St. Augustine, who states that 'No doctrine of the Christian Faith is more obstinately opposed than the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh.' When the writer of a text book for theological students states that the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh 'was, at the best, a pious opinion,¹⁹ he is asserting what no Catholic divine for eighteen centuries dare assert, and what every serious and unbiassed investigation into the history of Christian doctrine proves to be untrue. To some the surrender of a Catholic doctrine will seem deplorable: but to me, the way in which it is surrendered by those who would still claim to hold the whole of the traditional Catholic Faith in its integrity seems more grievous, because it is a sin against sincerity.

¹⁸ See the quotation on p. 66.

¹⁹ See the quotation on p. 67.

For my own part, I desire to state as plainly as possible that I do not hold, nor do I make any pretence in my teaching to hold, that belief in the mode of the resurrection of the dead which has been held by the Catholic Church for eighteen centuries. I am as unable to conceive of the mode of the resurrection in that form as are the English theologians whom I have quoted.

In my case, the change is due not primarily to any general philosophical or scientific theory, but is the result of the application of modern methods of literary and historical criticism to the interpretation of Scripture. And I imagine that this has also been a powerful influence in the case of many of my fellow-clergymen who have experienced a like change.²⁰ Where the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh has ceased to be believed by Christians, it is not merely because of its intrinsic improbability, nor because of the scientific difficulties to which it was open: Christian faith can triumph, and has triumphed, as our citations show, over such obstacles in the past. The doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh has ceased to be

²⁰ The laity, who as a body know very little of the literary and historical criticism of the Scriptures, have been influenced almost entirely by scientific and philosophical objections to the traditional doctrine.

believed by loyal Christians because it has become clear that Jesus Christ Himself did not teach it.

This is evident when we ask: Who have exercised the most powerful influence in the English Church in this subversion of the Catholic doctrine of the mode of the resurrection of the dead? The change has been due not to the influence of Darwin or Tyndall or Huxley, or of their followers, but in the main to the influence of two great teachers in the English Church, Frederick Denison Maurice and Archdeacon R. H. Charles.

Maurice, speaking as a prophet, inspired solely by moral conviction and endowed by spiritual insight, demanded a radical reconstruction of Christian eschatology. He not only demanded it: he accomplished it. In that reconstruction, the resurrection of the flesh, the corporal return of Christ to earth on the clouds, the Great Assize for the Judgment of all mankind, the endless torment of the wicked in hell, disappeared. Maurice taught that every choice between good and evil is a judgment day: every ecclesiastical or social or political crisis is a coming of Christ: that heaven and hell are moral and spiritual states, not places: that the resurrection of the dead

is not postponed to some distant resurrection day, but begins in this life; that at death the body of flesh and blood is abandoned for ever and that a spiritual *organon* suitable to a spiritual environment then becomes our possession.

Archdeacon Charles has worked by other means. Laborious and patient scholarship, modern methods of historical and literary criticism, have been used by him to discover the origin of the traditional Christian eschatology. The result of his herculean labours has been to confirm the intuitions of Maurice: the traditional eschatology, so materialistic and dramatic, did not originate with our Lord, but is an inheritance from Judaism which became attached to primitive Jewish Christianity and passed thence into primitive Christian theology, of which it constituted an important and attractive feature.

No doubt the success which has attended the efforts of Maurice and Archdeacon Charles would have been impossible if there had not been contemporary movements in the world of science and sociology. No doubt also these two pioneers would have failed had they not found ardent disciples and patient helpers: but the credit for this exoneration of Christian doc-

trine from a burdensome materialistic integument, which was rendering Christianity incredible to men of enlightenment and moral feeling, is primarily due, at least in clerical circles, to F. D. Maurice and R. H. Charles, and deserves more frank and generous acknowledgment than it has yet received from the Church of England.

Before the rise of Biblical historical and literary criticism, when a dogma of plenary verbal inspiration dominated the Church, and all Scripture was believed to be in agreement because all was held to be inerrant, the supreme authority of the teaching of Christ, although theoretically admitted, was practically contradicted. His distinctive message was obscured because of the desire to harmonize His teaching with other Biblical teaching which in fact conflicts with it. It has, however, been possible, since the progressive character of revelation and the existence of a human element in the Bible have been recognized, to assign to the teaching of Jesus a position of supreme authority, and to test all other Scriptural teaching, whether earlier or later, by His principles and ideals.

XI

What precisely was our Lord's teaching about the resurrection of the dead? We cannot grasp it adequately unless we see it against the background of contemporary Jewish beliefs.

In our Lord's day three beliefs were current among the Jews as to the Future Life :

(1) *The Ancient Hebrew belief.* According to this, the dead went down to Sheol, where they lived a vague, torpid, colourless existence—a life in death : a belief not dissimilar to that which we have in Homer. This traditional Israelite view, which denied resurrection and judgment, was that held by the Sadducees.

(2) *The Jewish Apocalyptic belief.* According to this, there would be a resurrection of the bodies both of the righteous and of the wicked from the dust of the earth, followed by a Judgment, in which the righteous would receive their reward and the wicked their doom. This doctrine is first taught in the Book of *Daniel* (c. 12, v. 2), and afterwards, with many variations, in the later Apocalypses and the Apocryphal books. Thus *2 Maccabees* clearly teaches that the martyrs of Judaism shall have their limbs restored at the resurrection, and that there will be complete identity between the

bodies of their martyrdom and the bodies of their resurrection. In 1 *Enoch* (c. 31, v. 1) and 4 *Ezra* (c. 7, v. 32) the teaching is equally clear and unmistakable: the risen and righteous shall have bodies in which they shall eat, and lie down, and rise up.

(3) *The Wisdom literature belief.* According to this, the souls of the righteous enter upon a blessed immortality as soon as they leave the body. There is no belief in the resurrection of the body at all. This is the view of the writers of *Wisdom*, *The Secrets of Enoch*, *The Book of Jubilees*, *The Assumption of Moses*. It was also the view of Philo Judaeus.

The Synoptic Gospels have preserved for us a dramatic incident in the ministry of our Lord, which makes the nature of our Lord's belief in the resurrection perfectly clear when viewed against this historic background. The Sadducees came to Jesus and put to Him a question, hoping to turn the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead into ridicule. Our Lord reproves their imperfect knowledge of the true significance of Scripture and their inadequate realisation of the power of God, and affirms that the Patriarchs were alive even in the days of Moses, although their dead bodies were lying in their sepulchres or had long since

mouldered into dust. He also affirmed that the sons of the resurrection are spiritual beings, and that the modes of the physical life have ended for them.

Here Christ rejects as inadequate the old traditional view held by the Sadducees that there was no resurrection and that the dead exist in a gloomy underworld in exile from God;²¹ but at the same time He decisively rejects the materialistic view of the resurrection taught in *Daniel* and the later Apocalyptists: and He clearly affirms that lofty conception of the resurrection which is expressed with such spiritual emotion in the *Book of Wisdom*.

This is the only passage in the Gospels which clearly indicates the precise nature of our Lord's teaching about the resurrection, but it is adequate. We may hardly press the parable of Dives and Lazarus, although in harmony with this view of the resurrection.

The resurrection teaching of the Fourth Gospel is not easy to interpret, as the language is largely mystical and symbolical. It is, however, thoroughly consonant with the Synoptic narrative. For the writer of the Fourth Gospel the resurrection of the dead is closely con-

²¹ See the Lament of Hezekiah in Isaiah xxxviii, 10—20, for the old traditional view of Sheol.

nected with the moral and spiritual resurrection of those who in this life hear and obey the call of the Son of God, Who is the Resurrection and the Life for them both now and hereafter.

In the teaching of our Lord, I find no reason for believing otherwise than that at death we have shed our physical integument for ever.

XII

It may be urged that the teaching of St. Paul is different. This may well be so, but even if it be so, He, whose slave Paul was, must be preferred. But it is by no means certain that it is so.

St. Paul is not easily understood, and most certainly has in some cases been grievously misunderstood and misrepresented from the days when he was first identified with Simon Magus. Modern criticism has enabled us to examine the great apostle's teaching with more freedom, and possibly with more insight, than could the Fathers of the Church.

It would seem clear that St. Paul's views as to the mode (not the fact) of the resurrection varied. As a Pharisee of the Pharisees he came to Christianity with an inherited belief in

the resurrection, a belief which was in all probability that of Apocalyptic Judaism. His belief in the fact of the resurrection was intensified by the vision of the Risen Jesus, but his conception of the mode of the resurrection was limited, during his early Christian life at least, by his expectation of the Second Coming during the lifetime of himself and his converts. It was, however, modified and spiritualized by his Christian experience. Such an expression of spiritual longing as we find in *Phil.* i, 23, indicates this: 'I am in a strait (whether to choose to live or to die), having the desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is very far better.'

It is the teaching about the spiritual body which is St. Paul's special and permanent contribution to the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. But the passage just cited indicates that St. Paul had no idea of going after death to Hades as a disembodied spirit, and his statement in *2 Cor.* 5, as clearly indicates that he had no idea of waiting for his spiritual body until the end of the world: the spiritual body is from God: it is a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens: and the Apostle looks to receive it when he puts off the material body in which he groans, being burdened.

XIII

I cannot but think that much confusion and false doctrine has arisen through Christian teachers reading into the New Testament what is not there. When the Rev. Charles Edward Douglas accuses me of 'openly teaching doctrine concerning the Resurrection which is contrary to the Christian religion as set forth . . . in Holy Scripture where the Resurrection of the Body is taught explicitly and is a vital element in the general theological and philosophical system,' I cannot but think that it may come as a surprise to him, and to others who use traditional language about the mode of the resurrection, to learn that the Scriptures of the New Testament do not even contain the phrases 'resurrection of the flesh' and 'resurrection of the body.' It certainly came as a surprise to the philosopher, JOHN LOCKE, in view of the traditional teaching of the Church. Bishop Stillingfleet assailed certain passages in Locke's *Essay on the Human Understanding* as undermining the Scriptural doctrine of the resurrection. This led Locke to investigate the matter, and his conclusions are worth quoting :

'He who reads with attention the discourse of St. Paul on the resurrection (1 Cor. xv.) will see that he

plainly distinguishes between the *dead* that shall be raised, and the bodies of the dead. For it is νεκροί, dead, πάντες, all, οἱ, who, which are the nominative cases to ἐγείρονται, are raised, ζωοποιηθήσονται, shall be quickened, ἐγερθήσονται, shall be raised, all along, and not σώματα, bodies, which one may with reason think would somewhere or other have been expressed, if all this had been said to propose it as an article of faith, that the same bodies should be raised. The same manner of speaking the Spirit of God observes all through the New Testament, where it is said “raise the *dead*”—“quicken or make alive the *dead*”—“resurrection of the *dead*” (Matt. xxii, 31, Mark xii. 26).’

(*Mr. Locke’s Reply to the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Worcester’s Answer to his Second Letter*, 1699, p. 166.)

‘The resurrection of the dead I acknowledge to be an article of the Christian faith: but that the resurrection of the same body, in your Lordship’s sense of the same body, is an article of the Christian faith, is what, I confess, I do not yet know. In the New Testament (wherein, I think, are contained all the articles of the Christian faith) I find our Saviour and the apostles to preach *the resurrection of the dead*, and *the resurrection from the dead*, in many places. But I do not remember any place where the *resurrection of the same body* is so much as mentioned: nay, what is very remarkable in the case, I do not remember, in any place of the New Testament (where the general resurrection of the last day is spoken of) any such expression as the *resurrection of the body*, much less of the *same body*.’ (*Ibid*, p. 166.)

‘I must not part with this article of the resurrection, without returning my thanks to your Lordship for making me take notice of a fault in my Essay. When I writ that book, I took it for granted, as I doubt not

but many others have done, that the Scripture had mentioned, in express terms, the resurrection of the body: but upon the occasion your Lordship has given me, in your last letter, to look a little more narrowly into what revelation has declared concerning the resurrection, and finding no such express words in Scripture as that "the body shall rise, or be raised, or the resurrection of the body," I shall, in the next edition of it, change these words of my book, "the dead bodies of men shall rise," into those of Scripture, "the dead shall rise." ' (Ibid, p. 209.)

Mr. Locke's conclusion appears to me to be correct, and his interpretation of I *Cor.* xv is certainly supported by the plain teaching of II *Cor.* v.

If the phrase 'resurrection of the body' is taken to mean, contrary to Catholic tradition, that there is a vital germ in the body which is put into the grave, and that this germ creates the resurrection body, I can find no evidence for it either in Scripture or reason. This was Origen's theory, but it was never accepted generally: and there is almost as much objection to it philosophically as to the resurrection of the flesh. There is no evidence, either from Scripture or Science, that any part of the body whatsoever which goes into the grave will ever come out of it again at the Resurrection. The Church has not only gone beyond Scripture, but it has gone astray from Scripture, and that

because the Church has tried to give an answer where Scripture gives none.

Well would it have been if the Church had practised in this matter the wise silence of BISHOP LATIMER. Romanist controversialists, in order to secure some admission of the existence of Purgatory, were pressing him to answer the question: 'Where was the soul of the daughter of Jairus between her death and Christ's words, "Daughter, I say unto thee Arise"?'

'Where was the soul now after it went out of this young maid?' Now my answer is this: I cannot tell: but where it pleased God it should be, there it was. Is not this a good answer to such a clerkly question? I think it be: other answer nobody gets at me; because the Scripture telleth me not where she was.'

(*Sermons of Bishop Hugh Latimer*, p. 550.)

XIV

It is an accepted principle of the Church of England that her formularies are to be interpreted in the light of Holy Scripture, rather than Holy Scripture by the language of the formularies. The *Regula Fidei* and *Doctrina tradita* are subject to *Scriptura Sacra*. What cannot stand the test of Holy Scripture is not

to be required as an article of the Faith nor be thought necessary to salvation.

The resurrection of the flesh and the resurrection of the body, literally interpreted in the traditional sense, do not conform to this test. No alternative remains but to abandon them.

And in doing this we are in no sense premature. The race and religion from which we inherited the idea of the resurrection of the flesh have already set us an example, as the following extract from the *Jewish Encyclopaedia* attests :

‘ In modern times the belief in the resurrection has been greatly shaken by natural philosophy, and the question has been raised by the Reform rabbis and in rabbinical conferences . . . whether the old liturgical formulas expressing the belief in resurrection should not be so changed as to give clear expression to the hope of immortality of the soul instead. This was done in all the American Reform Prayer Books. At the rabbinical conference held at Philadelphia it was expressly declared that the belief in the resurrection of the body has no foundation in Judaism, and that the belief in the immortality of the soul should take its place in the liturgy.’

(Art. *Resurrection*, Vol. 10, written by Kaufmann Kohler, Ph.D., President of the Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati, Ohio.)

The same article describes the Philadelphia Conference, held in November, 1869, as one of ‘ the five epoch-making Conferences of

Judaism . . . whose deliberations and decisions form an important chapter in the development of the faith.'

The article *Rabbinical Conferences* gives the decision of the Conference, one of six decisions then given on various matters :

'(6) The belief in the bodily resurrection has no religious foundation, and the doctrine of immortality refers to the after-existence of the soul only.'

It may not be amiss to point out that another great religion, that of Islam, which inherited the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh from Judaism, still adheres to it. Muhammadanism is prevented from abandoning it by its literal adhesion to the *Qur'an*. The doctrine of Islam in this matter is precisely that formerly held by Catholic Christians. After the second blast of the trumpet the angel Gabriel will shout :

'O ye rotten bones, torn flesh, dispersed hairs, God commandeth you to be gathered together to judgment.'

(Al Beidâwi, Jallalo'ddin.)

and the dead will thereupon rise from their graves. (See *Qijamah*, Surah 75.)

XV

But although I must hold that the Church has gone astray in this matter of the mode of the resurrection of the dead, I can yet appreciate the reasons which led the Church to do so. Her doctrine of the mode of the resurrection of the dead was intended to safeguard certain distinctively Christian positions.

When the early Church took over the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh from contemporary Apocalyptic Judaism, and supported it by an uncritical exegesis of the *Old Testament*, it found that doctrine to be entirely in harmony with current philosophical theory in the Gentile world. As Dr. McDougall points out in his *Body and Mind*:

‘Among the Greek philosophers the dominant conception of the soul was that of a material substance, very thin and mobile, and having the power of spontaneous movement. The early Fathers, who shaped the doctrines of the Christian Church up to the fifth century, continued to hold this view of the soul. They were not materialists in the modern sense of the word, as applied to those who deny the existence of soul or spirit. But they were dualistic materialists; for while they regarded man as made up of soul and body, they held both soul and body to be material.’ (p. 29.)

The early Church found that the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh was exceedingly useful against the most dangerous opponents of Christianity, the Gnostics. These asserted that Matter was essentially evil, and therefore denied the reality of the Incarnation. The Christians affirmed that Christ had really appeared in the flesh, and had by that act redeemed the flesh, which in the case of Christians was henceforth fitted to share in the immortality of the soul, having first experienced on the day of resurrection some measure of transmutation.

Some students of the Christian Creeds have gone further, and have concluded that the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh arose as a protest against the Docetic teaching of the Gnostics. Certainly the teaching of the resurrection of the flesh did conflict with the principles of Gnosticism, but it did not arise as a protest against Gnosticism. It was in existence in the Church when Christianity first came into conflict with Gnosticism: it was a feature of very early Millenarianism or Chiliastic Christianity. Doubtless the pressure of Gnosticism strengthened by its opposition the early Christian affirmation of the resurrection of the flesh. It compelled Christian

teachers to put great emphasis on the flesh. But it is a mistake to regard the article 'resurrection of the flesh' as introduced into the Creed, as were the words 'Maker of heaven and earth,' as a protest against Gnosticism. 'Maker of heaven and earth' was an introduction into the Creed: the earliest form of the Apostles' Creed does not contain the phrase: but the words 'resurrection of the flesh' do appear in the earliest forms, and plainly pre-date the anti-Gnostic movement. This is clearly recognized and emphasized by Dr. BURN (an important English authority) in his book on the Creeds, in which he writes:

'The words, "resurrection of the flesh," are not to be considered anti-Gnostic, as some writers have supposed.' They constituted 'a part of the orthodox belief' of primitive Christianity, and are a survival of 'the bright dreams of early Christians.'

(Introduction to the Creeds, p. 65.)

Besides proving a valuable anti-Gnostic antidote, the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh served as a protest against that joyless, colourless conception of a future life which was only too common in the heathen world. 'What is enjoyment without a body in which to enjoy?' asked the simple Christian. 'Never doubt,' replied the Christian teacher, 'that you shall have a body in the future life. This very

same body which you now have shall be raised from the grave, every particle of it, and be so transmuted as to last for ever. In it you shall receive your reward; in it, if you apostatize, you shall receive your punishment.’²²

XVI

It is obvious that the traditional theory of the resurrection of the flesh is essentially a product of the thought, exegesis, and polemic of an age which has long passed away. For Christians to-day the reasons which impelled belief in the resurrection of the flesh in the past are fast ceasing to carry weight. The beliefs of Judaism, whether earlier or later, while a necessary stage in the Divine Revelation to humanity, are not necessarily authoritative for modern Christians who have grasped the fact of the evolution of moral and spiritual truth in and through Christ. Our philosophy is widely different from that of the early Fathers. The dualistic Materialism of which Dr. McDougall writes has no longer any vogue, and if it had,

²² In this connection see a scholarly article in *The Harvard Theological Review*, July, 1921, on ‘The Ethics and Eschatology of Methodius of Olympus.’

it is difficult to conceive that the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh could prove a valuable apologetic weapon. Personal identity in a future life is not preserved for us by the thought of possessing again the same body, nor does the possession of such a body seem to be demanded either as a means for contributing to the joy of the righteous or to the penal sufferings of the wicked. A new historical criticism, a new science, a new philosophy, a new psychology, have caused a general disbelief among modern Christians in this doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh as it has been believed for eighteen hundred years.

.What alternatives are open to us as Christian teachers to-day?

We can either take our stand with the Muhammadans and the Roman Church, or, in response to the modern interpretation of Scripture and the monitions of the modern mind, we can frankly acknowledge that we have abandoned a belief which is no longer tenable. It is this which I have done in stating publicly that the form which the doctrine of the resurrection assumes in my mind is the survival of death by a personality which has shed its physical integument for ever. By survival, I need

hardly add that I mean full survival of all that constitutes whatever is essential to a human personality, in short, all that is meant by the term 'personal identity.'

I am, my Lord,

Your obedient servant,

HENRY D. A. MAJOR.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

We regret not to have been able to publish, as an Appendix, the three professorial findings upon which the Bishop of Oxford's decision was based, but the Bishop desired to reserve to himself the right of publication at a later date.

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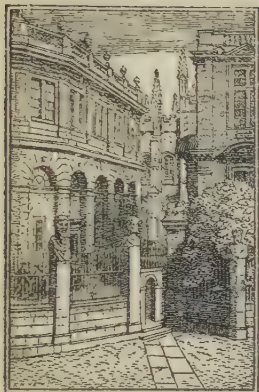
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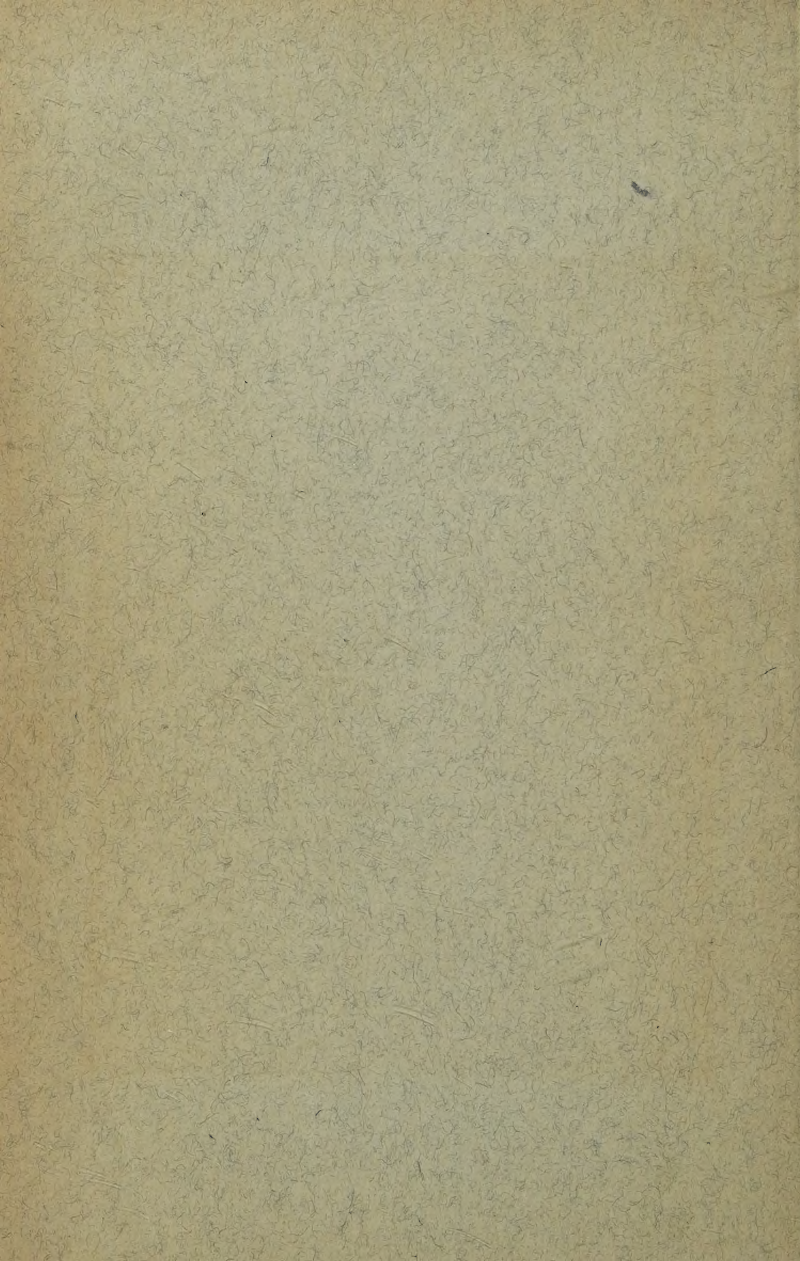
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